A comparison of the Seven Seals in Islamic esotericism and Jewish Kabbalah

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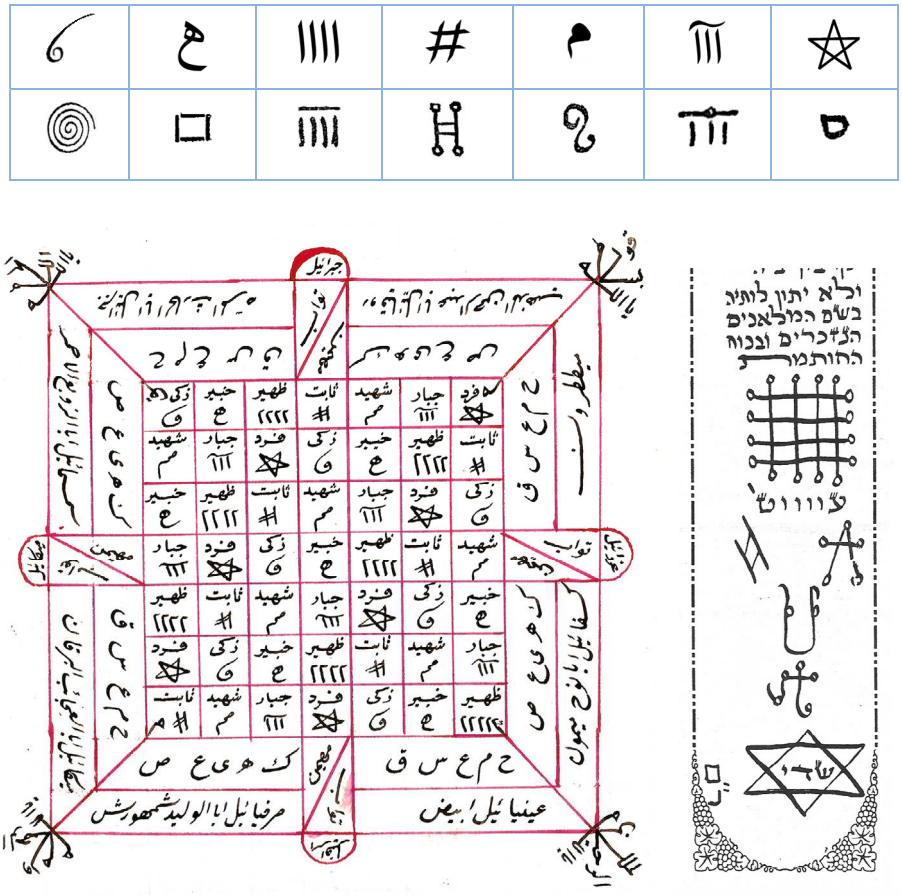

A comparison of the Seven Seals in Islamic esotericism and Jewish Kabbalah*

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In Islamic mysticism and theurgy, the Seven Seals represent in graphic form the Greatest Name of God; in Jewish Kabbalah, the Seals bear individual Divine Names which collectively form a "Great Name." We review and compare the primary interpretations and secondary associations for each Seal in Islam and Judaism, from which it is clear that the two traditions have developed largely independent understandings of the individual symbols. Nevertheless, points of convergence – such as the interpretation of the fourth Seal as a ladder and an ascent to/of goodness – do exist. Conversely, the attributes of the third Islamic and seventh Jewish Seals have a surprising amount in common. Collectively, the Seals have been linked via word- and letter-counting to key affirmations of each religion: the Islamic ones to the *Shahāda*, the Jewish ones to Psalm 46:7,11. In contrast to the Islamic Seals, individual correspondences are rarely given for the Jewish Seals and are inconsistent across sources. Kabbalistic amulets are more likely to employ the Names of the Seals than their symbols, and when present the latter are often much degraded; in contrast, Islamic talismans make frequent use of the symbol series. In Islamic magic, the Seven Seals are associated with the seven *Ṭahaṭīl* Names, which exhibit possible similarities to the Names of the Seals in Kabbalah. Intriguing overlaps of the Jewish Seal Names with Egyptian mythology and Vedic Sanskrit are explored, but ultimately it is thought more likely that the seven Names derive from the Names of God's fingers and eyes (five plus two, respectively) in the *Shīʿūr Qōmah* of the Hekhalot literature. Fittingly, exegesis of the Seals in both Judaism and Islam contains general themes of hands/fingers and sight/blindness.

Introduction

The Seven Seals (Fig. 1a) are a series of arcane symbols that feature prominently in Islamic mysticism, magic texts and talismans.[1,2,3,4] Although they are sometimes called the Seven Seals of Solomon,[5,6] their discovery is traditionally attributed to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 661 CE), cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad, who is said to have found them inscribed on a rock and to have recognized them as the Greatest Name (*al-Ism al-Aʿẓam*) of Allāh.[7,8] The poem describing the symbol series usually reads as shown below (p.3, top); for clarity, a number giving the position of each Seal (Fig. 1a) has been placed in angle-brackets after its description.[9]

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* Formatted for the journal *Studia Occulta Islamica*, which unfortunately ceased operation without publishing an issue. Its website has long been defunct, but its 2011 transliteration guidelines are archived at https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/15836185/download-the-transliteration-guidelines-directly-societas-occulta-. In an exception to these instructions, the Hebrew letter שׁ is in this paper represented by *sh* rather than *š*, to better match the transliteration (*sh*) of the cognate Arabic letter, ش .

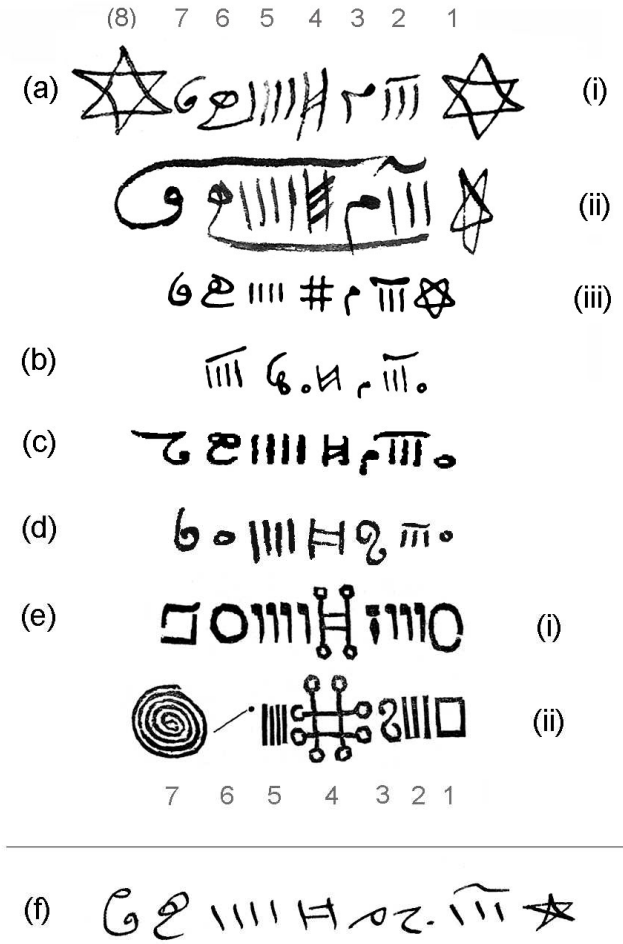

Fig. 1. The Seven Seals. Series (a)-(c) and (f) are Islamic, whereas (d)-(e) are Jewish. Like Arabic/Hebrew text, the symbol series are read from right to left. Here, the canonical Seals for (a) and (c)-(e) are numbered above (a) and below (e). **(a)** Examples of canonical Islamic Seal series. (i) Eight-membered series where the initial/final symbols are hexagrams rather than a pentagrams.[10] (ii) Seven-membered series commencing with a pentagram, with extended tails on the sixth and seventh Seals.[11] (iii) Seven-membered series without extended tails, as found in the *Shams al-Maʿārif* and *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma* of the Corpus Būnīanum. **(b)** Prototype Seal sequence in the *Dīwān of ʿAlī* (Brit. Mus. 577 Add. 7534). For this series, the numbering system at top/bottom of the figure breaks down beyond position 4; the four strokes are formally equivalent to the fifth Seal, and the small circle to the sixth. **(c)** Series from the Fātimid Ismāʿīlī *Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam* (Treatise on the Greatest Name). **(d)** A representative composite of the Jewish Seal series, as found in the Kabbalah manuscripts listed in fn 28. **(e)** Seal series from the printed Kabbalah book *Tōldōt ʾĀdām*, by Eliahu ben Moshe Loans and Joel ben Isaac Halpern, Section 158. (i) Second Seal series, second edition (1872 CE). (ii) First Seal series, second edition, but here repaired to include the missing sixth Seal. The latter is as presented as it appears in first Seal series in the first edition (1720 CE). **(f)** One of several Seal series with an interpolated *gīm* in a handwritten *Mujarrabāt* from *ca.* 1930 CE.[12]

Three rods <2> positioned after a seal <1>,
Above their heads, something like a straightened lance;
And a *mīm* <3>, blind and maimed, then a ladder <4>
To all that is hoped for, yet it is not a ladder.
And four objects like fingers lined up <5>
Pointing to good deeds, but without the rest of the hand.
Then a divided *hāʾ* <6>, and an upside-down *wāw* <7>
Like the siphon tube of a blood-letter, nevertheless it is not a cupping-glass.
This is the name of Allāh, praised for its supreme power,
If you did not know it before, know it now.

The Seals were espoused by the Ṣūfī schools of both Sunni[13] and Shīʿa Islam.[14] However, the belief that the Seven Seals were discovered by ʿAlī mean that the symbols have always held particular significance for Shīʿī mystics. For example, one of the earliest discourses on the Seals is found in a Fātimid Ismāʿīlī work titled *Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam* (Treatise on the Greatest Name),[15] seemingly from the early twelfth century CE,[16] and ʿAlī's poem about the Seals is included in Muḥammad al-Ṭihrānī's (d. 1970 CE) standard reference text on Shīʿa Islam.[17] The Seals have also attracted keen interest from pioneers of the Bābī, Shaykhī, Bahāʾī and related movements.[18,19,20]

While most prominent in the context of Islam and its offshoots, the Seven Seals are also known to Judaism,[21] with Kabbalistic use of these symbols dating back at least to the thirteenth century CE.[22] Here the glyphs[23] bear individual Names which collectively comprise a "Great Name,"[24] while the symbols themselves are "letters that God carved in the Creation and upon which He built the world," so that "upon each single letter there is the Name of God."[25] Although a covenant of seven seals would probably have been regarded as special by medieval Kabbalists (as discussed below), the Jewish Seven Seals are often referred to rather prosaically by terms such as "seven symbols of the great Rabbi," with many alternate identities proposed for the sage in question.[26] The usual sequence of Jewish symbols (Fig. 1d,e) is the same as in the canonical Islamic series (Fig. 1a,c). In Judaism, the term "Seal of Solomon" was applied not to the ensemble of seven symbols but rather to an individual pentagram or hexagram, i.e. to the symbol that commences the canonical Islamic series (Fig. 1a).[27] Surprisingly, primary Jewish sources do not use either of these geometries for the first Seal, but instead employ a simple circle or square, or (rarely) a triangle (Fig. 1d,e).[28] More will be said of this in the next section.

The prominence with which the Seven Seals feature in the eighteenth century CE book *Kanz al-Khavāṣṣ, Kanz al-Yahūd*,[29] which allegedly focuses on talismanic magic of Jewish origin used by Muslims in Persia, encourages the impression that the Seals were a Jewish innovation. Independently of this, the Bahāʾī scholar Stephen Lambden feels little doubt that "these graphic signs are examples of Islamo-biblica or *Israīliyyāt* ('Israelitica') rooted material reflecting pre-Islamic Abrahamic-Judaic traditions which have been assimilated into Islam."[30] On the other hand, Gershom Scholem and Gideon Bohak – two leading scholars of Kabbalah and Jewish magic – are of the opinion that the Seal series in its mature form (as seen in Fig. 1d) entered Judaism from Islam.[31]

It may not be possible to decide unequivocally whether the symbols' ultimate origins lie in Judaism or Islam. For example, Bohak points to the hidden propagation of esoteric material within Judaism for up to 1500 years.[32] When speaking of the ninth to twelfth centuries CE, Steven Wasserstrom observed that "the 'creative symbiosis' between Muslim and Jew extended deeply into the magical realm,"[33] so precursors of the Seals may have trafficked repeatedly between the two religions, all the while continuing to evolve. In any case, the symbols may reflect older writing systems foreign to both cultures.[34] Deeper study is clearly warranted, so a comparison of the Seals' origins and transmission in each tradition – both apocryphal and historical – is the focus of the next section.

Origins and propagation

Emilie Savage-Smith considers the Islamic Seven Seals to have been assembled in the twelfth century CE.[35] However, the talisman of Archduke Rainer, which shows a rudimentary form of the Seven Seals, has been dated to the tenth/eleventh centuries CE,[36] and the Seals reportedly feature in an amulet against the Qarīna dating from the same period.[37] Imām ʿAlī is credited as the author of the traditional poem that describes the shapes of the Seal symbols,[38,39] but realistically the verses are more likely to have originated much later with his descendant, al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 1044 CE).[40,41] Another early prototype of the symbol series (Fig. 1b) – with a matching version of the poem – is preserved in the *Dīwān of ʿAlī* (Brit. Mus. 577 Add. 7534),[42,43] but did not become widely diffused.[44,45] Degraded forms of this prototype seem to have survived in certain repeat-letter ciphers which also claim to represent the Greatest Name.[46] ʿAlī's verses describing the Seals are often found as a component of the *Jaljalūtīah*, one of the great oral conjurations of Islamic magic.[47] While the entire rite is sometimes attributed to ʿAlī,[48,49] its full chain of transmission alleges that it was revealed by the angel Jibrāʾīl (Gabriel) to Muḥammad and then passed via ʿAlī and six others to Imām al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 CE), who "made it known" along with the Seal symbols.[50,51,52] Extant manuscripts of this early source usually show the Seals in their now standard sequence (Fig. 1a). The Seals are reportedly referred to in the *Sirr al-maktūm fī mukhāṭabat al-nujūm* attributed to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209),[53] but the symbols are not shown.

The canonical Seal series was popularized throughout the Islamic world by the Egyptian-based Ṣūfī teacher Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf al-Būnī (d. *ca.* 1225 CE), who included the glyphs and their purported meanings and uses in his influential *Shams al-Maʿārif wa-Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*. Thence they came to feature in other works of the "Corpus Būnīanum"[54] whose connection to al-Būnī is probably more thematic than historical,[55] such as the *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma*[56] (e.g., Fig. 1a(iii)) and the expanded/late *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā*.[57] The symbols are accompanied by cognate versions of ʿAlī's poem, whose verses (essentially as given above) appear either in isolation[58] or as part of the *Jaljalūtīah*, including the short/early invocation of 70 couplets (*al-ṭarīqa al-ṣughrā*).[59] al-Būnī's lead was followed in subsequent popular compendia of magic, such as the *Shumūs al-Anwār* of Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Tilimsānī (d. 1336 CE).[60] An erroneous ordering of the Seal series in a lithographed version of the *Shumūs* has unfortunately been copied extensively in Western works.[61,62] Later, the Corpus Būnīanum was again the main source of

information on the Seals found in the *Fatḥ al-Malik al-Majīd* of Aḥmad ibn ʿUmar al-Dayrabī (d.1738/9 CE), which is sometimes called *Mujarrabāt al-Dayrabī*.[63]

One feature common to very early Islamic series[64] and to many handwritten Jewish Seal series is the use of small circles to depict both the first and sixth canonical Seals (Fig. 1b-d). Hans Winkler, who examined only Islamic sources, considered the former trait to be a hallmark of very early series, with the use of five- or six-pointed stars for the first Seal (Fig. 1a) being a later development. Early material indicates the original forms of both the first and sixth canonical Seals to be the Arabic letter *hāʾ*, with respective origins in the isolated (ه) and initial/medial (هـ, ﻫ) forms of this letter.[65] The persistent use of a circle or square rather than a penta- or hexagram for the first Seal in Jewish series[66] suggests that the transfer from Islam must have occurred early in the known history of the seven-membered series, seemingly after the *Dīwān of ʿAlī* prototype (Fig. 1b) had fallen out of favour but before the Seals' promotion – along with the use of five- or six-pointed stars for the first Seal – by al-Būnī (Fig. 1a). This would place it around the time of composition of the Fātimid Ismāʿīlī treatise mentioned above, whose symbols and sequence (Fig. 1c) closely approximate the oldest Jewish series (Fig. 1d). After its import into Kabbalah, the symbol series seems to have developed an autonomous existence within esoteric Judaism,[67] where it remained largely impervious to the stylistic developments occurring to its Islamic counterpart.

In Judaism, the special nature of a covenant of seven seals would probably have been familiar to medieval Kabbalists from earlier sources, such as the texts of Aramaic incantation bowls of the third to eighth centuries CE[68] or the (very Jewish)[69] Book of Revelation that concludes the Christian Bible.[70] In *Maʿaseh Merkavah*, a central text of Merkabah/Hekhalot mysticism (200-700 CE), seven seals are placed on the *meqūbal*'s body to coerce the Angel of the Countenance to descend to earth.[71,72] In *Hēkhalōt Rabbatī* (*Pirqē Hēkhalōt*), another central work, different seals are required to negotiate each of the seven stages of mystical ascent to God's chariot-throne, the *merkavah*.[73,74,75] In both cases, the tokens appear to be Names composed of Hebrew letters rather than graphic designs.[76] In the later *Hēkhalōt Zūṭartī*, seals or rings bearing Divine Names are again required for safe passage during the ascent,[77] but now the goal is not so much the vision of the *merkavah* as the acquisition of the ultimate "spell and seal," which in turn grants the *meqūbal* unlimited control over heaven and earth.[78] It is difficult not to connect this concept with Islam's expression of the "Greatest Name" as an incantation/poem describing a group of Seals whose magical power was considered supreme. Since the Kabbalistic Seven Seals grant access to the supernal realms,[79] it is not surprising that some modern authors identify them with the tokens required for ascent to the *merkavah*.[80,81,82] But, as we shall see below when considering their Names, the Seven Seals may have a more direct connection with the ultimate spell/seal of *Hēkhalōt Zūṭartī*.

Despite such highly potent antecedents in pre-Kabbalah mysticism, the collective term for the Jewish Seven Seals is often an understated phrase such as "seven symbols of the great Rabbi," where the individual is variously identified as Rav Huna,[83] Abraham av Beth Din,[84] an unknown "Nohaniel Gaon,"[85] Nachmanides,[86] Isaac ben Samuel of Acre,[87] or simply "the sages of Israel."[88] The sheer diversity of alleged originators, who span the

third to fourteenth centuries CE, could be seen as additional evidence for a non-indigenous origin. While on stylistic grounds the Jewish Seals seem to date to the twelfth century CE, the alleged source most likely to have introduced them into Jewish circles is Isaac of Acre, a Palestinian Kabbalist of the thirteenth/fourteenth century CE, who spent time in Spain and North Africa[89] and was influenced by Ṣūfī concepts.[90,91] Rabbi Isaac was an adherent of Nachmanides and "was an expert in composing the sacred Names (*ẓerufim*, i.e., letter combinations), by the power of which angels were forced to reveal to him the great mysteries."[92] The Seals and their Names are given in the name of Rabbi Isaac in the earliest extant Hebrew manuscript to show them, Moscow-Günzburg 775.[93,94] One of its five Seal series is presented alongside a talismanic square containing the word "אללה" (ʾAllah), which may reflect an Islamic connection for the material.[95]

The Seal series and Names appear again in the *Sefer ha-Razīm* section of the Byzantine ms. NYPL Heb. 190 (1464-8 CE).[96] They also appear in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*,[97] a collection of magical documents assembled by the itinerant Rabbi Joseph ben Elijah Tirshom in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century CE, probably in Ottoman Turkey or Greece.[98] There, the Seal series "is for the keeping of the way, and there is nothing like it; and it is tested by all the Rabbis."[99] Subsequently the Seals – and, much more often, their Names alone – appear in *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*,[100] an encyclopedia compiled in the seventeenth century CE by Rabbi Moses ben Mordecai Zacuto, the RaMaZ, who was mainly active in Italy (d. 1696 CE). This grimoire of practical Kabbalah, which lists thousands of magical Names of God, was widely circulated in manuscript, especially in North Africa.[101] The Seals and their names also appear in a 17th century CE Ashkenazi manuscript.[102] The first printed Kabbalah book to include the Seal symbols and their Names was *Tōldōt ʾĀdām*, a text composed in the seventeenth century CE by Eliahu ben Moshe Luanetz/Loans, *Baʿal Shem* of Virmyze (Worms, Germany), and his student Joel ben Isaac Heilprin/Halpern, the *Baʿal Shem* of Zamoshtch (Zamość, Poland).[103] The former was supported by the Kabbalist later credited with creating the famous Golem of Prague.[104,105,106] The text was printed anonymously in 1720 at Zolkiev (Zhovkva, Ukraine) by *Baʿal Shem* Joel ben Uri Heilprin/Halpern of Satanow (Sataniv, Ukraine), the grandson of Joel ben Isaac, and later reprinted in 1872 at Lemberg (Lviv, Ukraine).[107] The book, which is narrowly focused on curing conjugal and reproductive problems,[108] presents the Seal Names and two versions of the symbol series (Fig. 1e).[109] The shift from manuscript to printed page was reportedly accompanied by much self-censorship.[110,111]

Primary and secondary meanings

The core Islamic and Jewish interpretations of each Seal are presented in Table 1. The Islamic material focuses on descriptions of the symbols' shapes, with a moral dimension most evident in the description of the fifth. The most obvious agreement between the two traditions is for the fourth Seal, the ladder of ascent. A major difference is that, in Judaism, each of the Seven Seals has a specific name: from the first to seventh, *Y'ṭath Ṭath S'ṭīṭ S'ṭīṭyah ʾAgrēpṭī Marōm Shamrīʾēl*. While these are clearly Divine Names, even the earliest Kabbalistic document to mention the Seals also explains most of them as acronyms (Table 1, column 4). The Names will be explored in detail below. As a

Table 1. Mainstream interpretations of each Seal

Seal	Islamic (Corpus Būnīanum, including [*Jaljalūtīah*])[a]	Jewish (Moscow-Günzburg 775, f.36a-37b; NYPL Heb. 190, p.146-147 & 168; *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, p.141; Jer. NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330/17, p.209a; *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, p.335-336; *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* Section 158; [Kaplan])[b]	
	Description	**Description**[c]	**Acronym/Name**[d] **with Expansion/Meaning**[e]
1	A seal [, its five corners united to the mystery]	[Ring] A ring, without beginning or end,[f] like the Lord. With His power he revives / resurrects the world to recognize the Gates of Intellect / to know His praises.	*Yiṭaṯh*; *Y'ṭaṯh*; *Y'ṭaṯh* + *Yiṭaṯh*; *Y'ṭaṯh* + *W'ṭaṯh*; [Yatath]: "God, good, living" *or* "God, line/series, resurrection." (Jer. NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330 gives the final word as "you will be"). The Seal is called *ʿezqtaʾ*: a signet ring or seal-ring (*ʿizqetēʾ*, Dan 6:17); Aramaic (*ezaqta*).[g]
2	Three rods; above their heads, something like a straightened lance	[Spear over 3 lines] 3 *wāw*s and a spear *or* a lance over 3 spears. Against 3 sides / 3 corners of the world of settlement, for the north is not complete due to coldness and dryness; a growing thing.[h] All is the work of His hands, signified by the lance, and against Him everything is nothing.[i] It is only in His hand to kill and revive them (cf. 1 Sam 2:6).	*Ṭaṯh*; [Tath]: "Good, mortality/death" Cf. *Taṯh*, The Giver.[j] Compare also with the prefix *taṯh*-, meaning sub- or hypo-, i.e., under, below.[k]
3	A *mīm*, blind and maimed, without a tail[l]	[Curved line] Letter *zayin*, curved. His hand is spread to receive those who repent.[m] And He ties to their heads the crown, to fulfil that which is written: "Where those who repent stand, the completely righteous ones cannot stand."[n]	*S'ṭīṭ*; [Satit]: "Secret, good, hand, good" (NYPL Heb. 190 substitues "God" for "hand.") Cf. *Sēṭ*, *sēṭīm*,[o] deviation, transgression (Ps. 101:3, Hos. 5:2); hence *sāṭīt*, deviant, adulteress (Num. 5:19-20).[p]
4	A ladder to all that is hoped for, [in its centre are two rungs that belong together]; yet it is not a ladder;	[Ladder with two steps] A ladder with two rungs.[q] The Lord made two steps for the sun, and from cold and heat[r] to satiate the world *Or:* … two steps to serve, and heat as a source for abounding the world with good. And He made good against evil and evil against good.	*S'ṭīṭ'yah / S'ṭīṭ'yāh; S'ṭīṭ'yāh*; *S'ṭēṭēyah* + *S'ṭīṭyah*; *Siṭīṭʾyāh*; [Satitya]: "The secret is pure[r] and will rise; its/his goodness will ascend"[s] *or* "…will elevate its/his being."[t]
5	Four objects like fingers lined up, pointing to good deeds [and to the living as well], but without the rest of the hand	[Spear over 4 lines] Four rods / spears. God created His world with four elements, fire, wind, water, and earth; cold and heat, winter and summer.	*ʾAgrēf'ṭī*; *ʾAgrafṭī*; *ʾAgrīf'ṭī* + *ʾAgrafṭī*; *ʾAgrefṭī;* OR *ʾAgrēp'ṭī*; *ʾAgrapṭī*; *ʾAgrīp'ṭī* + *ʾAgrapṭī*; *ʾAgrepṭī*; [Agrepti]:[u] "Air/Mighty, greatness, one-fourth, sides, good, God/he will be."[v] Cf. *ʾigrēftī*: I clenched [my hand into] a fist; *ʾegrōf*, fist (Exod. 21:18; Isa. 58:4).
6	A divided *hāʾ*	[Ring] A ring, the master of every circle that exists. And therefore His creations revolve.	*Marōm*; *Mārōm*; *M'rūm* + *Marōm*; *Mērūm* + *Mērōm*; [Marom]: Cf. *Mārōm:* height (Mic. 6:6, Jer. 17:12).

			Over every figure is the lofty and holy One with neither beginning nor end.
7	A [crooked or] upside-down *wāw*, [which because of the secrecy is back-bent] like the siphon tube of a blood-letter; yet not a cupping-glass.	[Crooked *mēm*] A bent/crooked *mēm*. Understanding and searching all the world / mysteries and all the thoughts / reins of the hearts, revealing all the deep and secret things.[w] Nothing is concealed from before His eyes, for He is the keeper, the observer, and the seer.[x]	*Shamrīʾēl* / *Shōmrīʾēl* or *Shūmrīʾēl*; *Shamrīʾēl*; *Shamrīʾēl*; *Shamrīʾēl* [Shamriel]: "God Almighty watches and sees [all],[x] and all will behold Him"[y] *or* "…and [to Him] hearts will be revealed."[z] *Shamrīʾēl* is an angelic guardian (see text).

[a] Hans Winkler;[112] information from *Jaljalūtīah* (in square brackets), Winkler.[113]

[b] Bibliographic details for primary sources are in fn 28 (with folio numbering for Moscow-Günzburg 775 explained in fn 93); for Kaplan, see elsewhere.[114] Differences between accounts in several of the manuscript sources have been addressed in detail previously.[115] NYPL Heb. 190 was not included in that survey, but it too exhibits small shifts in meaning which seem to reflect word substitutions arising from misreadings of letters. Consistent with the chronological position of this source, in some places its wording follows Moscow-Günzburg 775 while in others it matches *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*.

[c] Aryeh Kaplan's description of the Seal symbol is given first, in square brackets. The remainder (in normal type) is that in Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.37b (see above), with occasional supplementation as described elsewhere.[116] Much of this material is repeated in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*; phrases unique to the latter are given in white-on-grey type. Both Hebrew sources were translated by www.EverBurningLight.org (Providence University).

[d] Names, in order, are taken from the following: Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.37a (see above) and, if different, the Name from NYPL Heb. 190 p.168 is shown after a slash; Jerusalem NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330/17; *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* (Names from *yōd* sign entries 141 and 142 appear in that order, separated by a "+"); *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (if editions differ, the format is first edition + second edition); Kaplan's lexicalization into English, given in square brackets. Names identical in the first five sources are given only once before Kaplan's version. An apostrophe denotes a voiced *shwā*; underscored letter pairs represent a single Hebrew letter; white-on-grey type and translator details are as explained in note c.

[e] Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.37b (see above); *Shorshei ha-Shemot*, p.335-336, *yōd* sign 142, translated by Translation Services USA; *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, p.141. Note that, unlike the others, the sixth Seal Name is not considered to be an acronym.

[f] Cf. Isaiah Horowitz, "The circle represents something that constantly returns without end."[117]

[g] Marek Vinklát.[118]

[h] This section has slightly different (but equally challenging) syntax in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, whose reference to a three-cornered world may reflect the classical world-view in which there were just three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa). More surely relevant is the Midrashic teaching of Rabbi Eliezer (ca. 45-117 CE) that the northern side of the world was never completed; he claims that God says, "Whoever believes he is a god, let him come and complete the northern side," a point echoed explicitly in NYPL Heb. 190. From Isaiah Horowitz, one possible interpretation is that the power of the Torah enables the north – which is open toward evil – to be sealed off; "a growing thing" may thus refer to the incompleteness which is subsequently made complete by the giving of the Torah, whose observance is an ongoing work, like cultivation of the land.[119]

[i] At a deeper level, Kabbalah teaches that nothing/nothingness (*ʾayin*) is the ultimate reality of all things, i.e. "the Nought is the Being and Being is the Nought."[120] This parallels the Hindu belief that "Everything is nothingness and Nothingness is everything."[121] Other apparent overlaps with Eastern religions are addressed later in the text.

[j] *Taṯh Zel*, "The Profuse Giver," a title of *Keter*, the *sefīrāh* closest to God.[122]

[k] Ernest Klein.[123]

[l] The 'blind and amputated' nature of the *mīm* may echo an oral injunction from late antique Mesopotamia that has been preserved in the inscriptions on some Mandaean magic bowls. In full, the formula reads "… bound and sealed and cut and hobbled and banned and whipped and blinded … and deafened be the curse …".[124]

[m] Cf. Isa. 65:2. Also a hadith of Muḥammad: "Allāh spreads out His hand at night to accept the repentance of the one who sinned during the day, and He spreads out His hand by day to accept the repentance of the one who sinned during the night, (and that will continue) until the sun rises from the west."[125] In *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, the reference to a spread hand accords with the unusual shape of the Seal symbol inserted into the text, which resembles an inverted palm.

[n] A saying of Rabbi Abbahu, meaning that a penitent who repents out of love for God is superior to a righteous person who never sinned.[126] Cf. Luke 15:7.

[o] Ludwig Köhler & Walter Baumgartner.[127]

[p] Daniel Miller.[128] The biblical word begins with the letter *sīn*, whereas a *sāmeq* is usual in modern Hebrew (e.g. *soṭoh*, to deviate; *s'ṭīyoh*, deviation, aberration)[129] and in the Seal Name. A reference to deviancy could accord with the focus of this Seal on repentance and forgiveness (column 3).

[q] Cf. In the *Zōhar*, two rungs in the ladder upon which God's angels ascend and descend (Gen 28:10-19) have special significance; that dyad signifies remembrance and keeping, male and female, and the cut and folding back of circumcision.[130]

[r] NYPL Heb. 190 has "fear" in place of "heat," which makes little sense. *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* has טינור, whose meaning is unclear, in place of טהור, "pure."

[s] Version in Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.37b and *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, where the word for the last letter of the acronym is missing. The pattern of missing words in both of these documents (notes s, t, v & w) is identical and corresponds to losses at the right edge of the page in Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.37b, which at some point suffered excessive cropping. The other word listed as missing in *Shorshē* (notes y-z) is not lost by trimming but rather is illegible in Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.37b. Thus it seems that this actual manuscript leaf, compromised then as now, was the original source for the definitions of the acronyms in *Shorshē*; since these are given in a parenthetical addition to the main entry, they derive not from Zacuto himself but from Rabbi Abraham Alnaqar,[131] whose glosses (added in Algiers, 1784 CE) are incorporated into the modern printing of the book (see fn 28, source 4). Fortunately, *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* preserves the lost text from an uncompromised source. Additional detail on the variations between sources is provided elsewhere.[132]

[t] Version in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* and NYPL Heb. 190, which have not lost the word for the final letter of the acronym. For either version, Rav Kook (d. 1935 CE) speaks in similar terms of the inner spiritual light of human beings, once one knows "how to expand and rise, how to increase the good light up to the top, the making of all darkness into great light."[133]

[u] In the few sources where *dāgeshīm* might be expected to be made explicit, the *peh* is not so marked; it would therefore normally carry the soft pronunciation (*-f-*). However, since the Name is considered to be an acronym and the *peh* takes the hard pronunciation (*p-*) at the start of the expanded word, it is equally reasonable to transliterate it in this way, as done by Kaplan. This paper will routinely follow the latter convention.

[v] The final word, corresponding to the final letter of the acronym, is preserved only in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* ("God") and Jer. NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330 ("he will be"). An attempt to render the *Shōshān* expansion fluently might read "Great is God's glory, a quarter of which is His goodness."

[w] The final expression, which is from Dan 2:22, is preserved only in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (see note s). On searching the hearts, cf. Jer. 17:10, 1 Chron 28:9.

[x] Cf. Prov. 15:3; Psalm 33:13; Jer. 16:17 & 23:24. In NYPL Heb. 190, the name is given as *Shōmrīʾēl* or *Shūmrīʾēl*, which preserves the sense of "keeper;" the additional ו in the acronym is expanded as ונורא, which appends "and awe-inspiring" to "Almighty."

[y] Cf. Rev. 1:7. This is the version in *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, where the last word of the acronym is listed as missing (see notes s & y) and/or the final two letters of the acronym (אל) are considered to come from the start of the last legible word (אליו).[134]

[z] Version in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, NYPL Heb. 190 and Jer. NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330, all of which specify a word for the final letter of the acronym (ל). Moscow-Günzburg 775 does specify a final word but the writing is unclear; it certainly begins with ל, and is probably the same word as in the other three manuscripts.

generalization, it seems that the first four Jewish Seals relate, respectively, to life/good, imperfection/death, repentance/forgiveness and good *vs.* evil (Table 1). On this basis, it seems that Deuteronomy 30:15 "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" may have served as a touchstone for the explanations of the first four Seals. The second, fourth and fifth Jewish Seals have in common that their descriptions (in one or more sources) contain references to heat and/or cold. The second and fifth may also be interrelated in another way, with the former focusing on the process of completion (three sides capped by a horizontal "lance") and the latter on the state of completeness (four sides). The four "sides" of Judaism are repentance, prayer, charity and Torah, the last of which may be alluded to in the second Seal by the lance (Table 1, note h).[135] On the seventh Jewish Seal as Divine eye (Table 1, columns 3-4), it is interesting to note that W.B. Stevenson long ago (and without knowledge of its Jewish counterpart) suggested an eye as the original motif for the seventh Islamic Seal.[136]

Meanings and properties of the Islamic Seals that are less widely diffused are given in Table 2, whose sources range from the twelfth to the fourteenth century CE. *Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam*, the Fātimid Ismāʿīlī treatise, recognizes ʿAlī's poem, but focuses on interpreting the Seals in Imāmological terms as symbols of increasing spiritual rank. The material from the Corpus Būnīanum relates mainly to the practical uses of individual Seals or pairs of Seals. That from al-Tilimsānī contains what Winkler considered to be more recent interpretations that post-date the core traditions reported by al-Būnī and his school;[137] the newer ones usually extend or complement the older. In relation to the second Seal, there may be a parallel between al-Tilimsānī's description of the One that is everything (Table 2) and the Jewish declaration that, in relation to God, everything is nothing (Table 1). The term "nothing(ness)" (*ʾayin*) can equally be expressed as "absolute unity;"[138] with this understanding, the Hebrew statement can also be interpreted to mean that "totality is singularity," or "all is One" (Table 1, note i).

In addition to the Seal-specific meanings detailed in Tables 1 and 2, the Islamic series has religious interpretations which are less easily tabulated. In *Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam*, the Fātimid Ismāʿīlī treatise, the seven symbols are explained in terms of the seven words of the *Shahāda* (Table 2), but the symbol series can also be deconstructed into twelve "letters" or elements (where each upright stroke of the second and fifth seal is counted as a separate element),[139] which then correspond to the twelve letters of the *Shahāda*.[140] Inclusion of the "lance" atop the second Seal, which has not yet been counted,[141] gives a total of thirteen letters; an alternative way to this total is to follow the extension of ʿAlī's poem given in the *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā*, which describes the Seals as containing four letters from the Jewish Torah, four from the Christian Gospels, and five from the Qurʾān.[142] A final repeat of the penta/hexagram, as in Fig. 1a(i), brings the total to fourteen, the pleroma of Twelver Shīʿism (Muḥammad, Fāṭima and the Twelve Immaculates).[143] The seven symbols or their five component elements from the Qurʾān have also been understood to represent Muḥammad, Fāṭima, and subsets of the Twelve Imāms.[144] Returning to letter-counting, al-Būnī suggests that the Seven Seals may represent the seven letters of *al-Racḥmān*, or perhaps a palindromic seven-letter string in Sura 36:40 (*kull fī fallak*) or in Sura 74:3 (*rabbaka fakabbir*).[145]

Table 2. Exegesis and secondary interpretations of each Seal in Islam

Seal	Fātimid Ismāʿīlī *Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam*[a] [Second mapping to *Shahāda*]		*Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā* (attrib. al-Būnī)[b]	*Shumūs al-Anwār* (al-Tilimsānī)[c]
1	*Allāh*; the sticks are *ʾilāh*	[*Lā*]. A ring, symbol of the pledge around the neck of those in the Responded Circle (lowest rank)	A seal and three strokes, this is a quick remedy for every harm that enters the body and makes us sick, and a quick way to all kinds of punishment.	Oh God, I implore you by the seal of the five/six corners, which are drawn through the corners/lights of your Kingdom.
2		[The sticks are *ʾilāh*; the lance is *Allāh*]. Sticks are the three ranks above Responded Circle: the faithful and those with and without admitted limits; the lance is the material that flows down from Allāh above, good for defence against evil.		And by the three *ʾalif*s, the unified, that unify duality and unity. For everything is created in pairs:[d] man and woman, heaven and earth, etc. And you are the absolute One and yet everything at the same time, which is the true couple. And I ask you by the *ʾalif* which lies above as a *madda* (i.e., by the lance), like an arrow that points to the perfection of your power and your superiority over all.
3	*Lā*	[*Mīm*, a jewel of the *Shahāda*]. The Limited Caller, dark because this rank is hidden; infinite without start or end; to the next rank (Seal 4) it appears to resemble a woman.	And a *mīm*, yes, that makes flow the blood of every man who is impious (i.e., sharp sword).[e]	By the blinded *mīm*,[f] which leads its full cycle in awe/reverence; it was blinded by the blackness of the *gīm*, for in it is the ink of the ascetic and pious.[g]
4	Ladder + first 2 sticks are *ʾilāh*	[*ʾIllā*]. The Unlimited Caller: an Imam who serves as an escape-ladder to paradise for spirits trapped on this worldly island, especially during hiding of the authoritative sources (Seal 5).	Then a ladder with which the steps of the height are climbed.	By the ladder, whose secret meaning is the seven layers of heaven which are built like steps on top of each other.
5	Last 2 sticks are *ʾillā*	[*ʾIlāh*]. Good things: the four authoritative sources, the best of which is the Imam of the great Door, the Caller of Informing.	Four strokes, which shield us from our enemy's blows. Summon people with them, they will come quickly.	And by the four *ʾalif*s, suggestive of a quadruped and the four fingers, and by what is contained in them from the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms and the Koran.
6	*Hū*	[*Hāʾ*, another jewel of the *Shahāda*]. The Guardian; paradise and the images of the Door; also the number 5 (٥) and thus an everlasting and infinite circle.	And our seal is useful for the good, its properties are superior.	And by the sixth seal, which has eight corners,[h] whose hidden meaning is the mystery of the eight throne-bearers. And by the curved *hāʾ*,[i] which stands at the center of the ramparts [of knowledge], it points with the marvellous mystery of its circles to the hidden meaning of divinity. It rises in the lofty company [of archangels] and circulates from the upper to the lower, circulating in the ramparts of knowledge and instruction that permeate all living creatures.
7		[*Wāw*, last jewel of the *Shahāda*]. A *wāw* with head bowed (i.e., inverted) to honor the completeness of this level of Imam, The Speaker, and to salute the travel of blessings from the First Mind to those below. Also its value, 6, the first complete number.	[Various practical uses when combined with the sixth Seal; harmful if their order is reversed]	

[a] An explanation of technical terms such as Caller, Guardian, etc. are given by Arun Singh; the same author observes that the mechanism and numerology of Ismāʿīlī mystical ascent share direct similarities with Jewish Kabbalah.[146]

[b] Hans Winkler.[147]

[c] Winkler.[148]

[d] Qurʾān 51:49

[e] W.B. Stevenson explains that the descriptor *ʾabtar*, which is applied to the *mīm*, can mean either "without a tail" (Table 1) or "sharp," and observes that Tawfiq Canaan understands the word in the sense of a sharp sword.[149] It can also mean incomplete, truncated, cut off, disconnected, or childless.[150]

[f] W.B. Stevenson takes the descriptor *ṭamīs*, which is applied to the *mīm*, to mean "obliterated" or "transformed" (from *ṭamasa*, to efface or destroy) rather than "blind."

[g] From the same root as *ʾabtar* ("cut off," the descriptor applied to the *mīm*) comes *tabattala*, meaning complete separation from the world in devotion to Allāh, which may underpin this reference to the ascetic and pious.[151]

[h] An octagram replaces the split- *hāʾ* in al-Tilimsānī's series.[152]

[i] Although al-Tilimsānī refers to the final Seal in his series as a split-*hāʾ*, it looks more like an inverted *wāw* and occupies the position of the inverted *wāw* in al-Būnī's series.

For its part, the Jewish Seal series is linked to the words of Psalm 46:7 and 46:11, "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah." Here too the connection is explained in terms of letter-counts. Both the seven Seal Names and the verse from the Psalm consist of 31 Hebrew letters, and (if one includes repeat occurrences) the letters of the former that are found in the latter appear 21 times in total.[153] This was considered significant, perhaps because 21 is the numerical value of the Divine Name *ʾEHYEH* ("I Am," Ex 3:14); Isaac of Acre considered this number to be the Kabbalist's gateway to *Keter* ("Crown"), the *sefīrāh* closest to God.[154] Variant Seal Names which do not conform numerically are referred back to the canonical ones.[155] The distributed nature of the relationship precludes a simple mapping of each Seal to an individual Hebrew word in the verse.

Tables of correspondence

Wider associations of the Islamic and Jewish Seals are given in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. The information in columns 2/4, 3 and 6–9 of Table 3 is often presented together in Islamic manuscripts in a "magic square" format, in which the Seals form a horizontal row at or near the top of the *wafq* or *jadwal*, and data from the columns of Table 3 are written (in register) to form the lower rows (Fig. 2a). Authorities disagree as to whether this classic "table of correspondence" has talismanic power in its own right,[156,157,158] or whether it merely serves as a resource for the magician's reference.[159] The *sawāqiṭ*, i.e. the letters not found in the *Fātiha* that opens the Qurʾān,[160] are the initial letters of a subset of the Beautiful Names of Allāh (Table 3). In addition to the dominant mapping of Seals to *sawāqiṭ*, there is an old variant that maps three of the last four Seals differently to the letters (Table 3, major and minor *sawāqiṭ*, respectively).[161] Each Seal also maps directly to one of the seven classical planets, and hence to a day of the week, an angel and a *jini* (Table 3). They also correspond with the *Ṭahaṭīl* Names, which are discussed below. In addition to attributing component elements ("letters") of the Seal symbols to the core scriptures of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the Būnīan *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā* nominates one of the three holy books as the source of each Seal (Table 3). Associations that are less widely diffused, such as prophets' names, physical properties (hot/cold/dry/moist)[162] and incense resins (benzoin, mastic, sandal, etc.),[163] tend to exhibit more variations and contradictions across sources; not all are shown in the Table.

Hans Winkler was often defeated by al-Tilimsānī's rather opaque exegesis of the Seals. For example, the latter's explanation that the *mīm* of the third Seal "was blinded by the blackness of the *gīm*" (Table 1) left Winkler baffled as to where this *gīm* was to be found.[164] He proposed a confusion between the shapes of *mīm* and *gīm* on the part of North African commentators, but it is perhaps more likely that the comment relates to formulae where the Seals and their cognate *sawāqiṭ* letters (Table 3) are interleaved;[165] such arrangements place the *gīm* of *al-Jabbar* (the Beautiful Name associated with the second Seal) immediately before the "blind *mīm*" of the third Seal. Occasionally one meets with Seal series where only the *gīm* has been interpolated (Fig. 1f).

Table 3. Correspondences for the Islamic Seals

Seal	*Saw-āqiṭ* Major[a]	Beautiful Name[b,c]	*Saw-āqiṭ* Minor[d]	Let-ter[e]	Planet[f]	Day[f]	Angel[g]	*Jini*[g,c]	*Ṭahaṭīl* Name[h,c]	Book[i]	Prophet, etc.[j]
1	ف	*al-Fard*	ف	ا	Sun	Sun	Rūqīaʾīl	Mudhab	*Lelṭahṭīl*	Qurʾān	Solomon, David
2	ج	*al-Jabbār*	ج	ه	Moon	Mon	Jabrīāʾīl	Murra	*Maḥṭahṭīl*	Qurʾān	-
3	ش	*al-Shahīd*	ش	ط	Mars	Tues	Samsamāʾīl	Aḥmar	*Qahṭīṭīl*	Gospel	Muḥammad[k]
4	ث	*al-Thābit*	ز	م	Mercury	Wed	Mīkāʾīl	Barqān	*Fahṭobṭīl* / *Fahṭīṭīl*[l]	Gospel	Idris / Enoch
5	ظ	*al-Ẓahīr*	ظ	ف	Jupiter	Thu	Sarafīaīʾīl	Shamhūrish	*Nahahṭaṭīl*	Torah	Lot
6	خ	*al-Khabīr*	ث	ش	Venus	Fri	ʿAnīaʾīl	Abyaḍ	*Jahlaṭaṭīl*	Torah	-
7	ز	*al-Zakī*	خ	ذ	Saturn	Sat	Kasfīāʾ īl	Maymūn	*Lakhhaṭaṭīl*	Torah	Seth; Qāʾim / Mahdī;[m] Bāb & Bahāʾullāh[n]

[a] E.g. Tawfiq Canaan.[166] The *sawāqiṭ* associated with each Islamic Seal is the first letter of the cognate Beautiful Name.

[b] From top to bottom: 1. The Singular/Unique/Single. 2. The Compeller/Almighty/Powerful. 3. The Witness. 4. The Stable/Firm/Solid. 5. The Visible/Evident/Helper. 6. The Shrewd/Vigilant/Informed. 7. The Pure. These interpretations are from Georges Anawati,[167] Edmond Doutté,[168] and Hans Winkler.[169]

[c] Underscored letter pairs represent a single Arabic letter.

[d] Less common sequence, as found in the short/early version of al-Būnī's *Shams*, i.e. *Shams al-Maʿārif wa-Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*, BnF ms arabe 2647.[170] In such sources, the Beautiful Names are reordered accordingly.

[e] Secondary letter attribution from Aḥmad al-Būnī (attrib.), *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma*, which I have discussed elsewhere.[171] The origin and significance of these letters is unclear.

[f] Standard attributions, e.g. Canaan.[172]

[g] Consensus from Canaan,[173] Anawati,[174] and Doutté.[175]

[h] Consensus from al-Būnī (attrib.), *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma*;[176] short vowelling follows Frances Harrison & Nineveh Shadrach.[177]

[i] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā*.[178]

[j] Individuals with direct linkages to the Seals. Unless otherwise indicated, these are from R.G. Anderson[179] and cited by Tawfiq Canaan.[180]

[k] From Canaan[181] and Arun Singh.[182]

[l] These two variants are often difficult to distinguish when handwritten in cursive form (see text). The first version is explicit in the *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma*,[183] in Harrison & Shadrach,[184] and in most other derivative sources. The second seems to be used at other places in the *Uṣūl*,[185] and definitely appears elsewhere.[186]
[m] Shaykhī exegesis; see text.
[n] Bahāʾī exegesis; see text.

Table 4. Correspondences for the Jewish Seals

		Inferred (most Jewish sources)[a]		Table from *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*[b]				Gloss from Moscow-Günzburg 775[c]			Traité, *Aztarax*[d]
Seal	**Name** (Kaplan)[e]	**Day**	**Planet**	**Planet**[f]	**Angel**[f]	**Divine Name**[g]	**Divine Formula**	**Heb-rew**[h]		**Likely translation**	**Planet**
1	Yatath	Sun	Sun	Venus	ʿAnaʾēl	*-WH*	*ʾAnaqtam*[i]	אי	*ʾy*	Not; Where[j]	Mercury
2	Tath	Mon	Moon	Mercury	Mīkhaʾēl	*Ado-*	*Pastam*[i]	אם	*ʾm*	If; Surely not[k]	Moon
3	Satit	Tue	Mars	Moon	Gabrīʾēl	*-naī*	*Paspasīm*[i]	אי	*ʾy*	Not; Where[j]	Venus
4	Satitya	Wed	Mercury	Saturn	Qafzīʾēl	*Shaddaī*	*Dīōnsīm*[i]	אין	*ʾyn*	Nothingness	Mars
5	Agrepti	Thu	Jupiter	Jupiter	Zadqīʾēl	*Ṣabʾaōth*	*Kōzō*[l]	אם	*ʾm*	If ; Surely not[k]	Jupiter
6	Marom	Fri	Venus	Mars	Samaʾēl	*Ḥanūn*	*Bemūksaz*[l]	אי	*ʾy*	Not; Where[j]	Sun
7	Shamriel	Sat	Saturn	Sun	Rafaʾēl	*YH-*	*Kōzō*[l]	איי	*ʾyy*	Islands[m]	Saturn

[a] Day-of-week correspondence inferred from Moscow-Günzburg 775, *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (excluding location in note b) and *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (see text).
[b] Shown in Fig. 2b; Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE), Comites Latentes 145, p.460.
[c] Moscow-Günzburg 775 f.36a (see fn 28 and fn 93 for bibliographic details).
[d] *Traité des Sept Émanations Planétaires* (Aztarax Liber 1851), chapter 8; p.891.[187]
[e] For simplicity, Aryeh Kaplan's transliterations of the Seal Names are shown.[188]
[f] The angel-planet correspondance in the *Shōshān* table agrees with lists given elsewhere in the same work,[189] as well as with Islamic sources (Table 3).
[g] Name(s) 2+3, *Adonaī,* Lord; 4, Almighty; 5, (Lord) of Hosts; 6, Gracious; 7+1, *YHWH*, the Tetragrammaton. Underscored letter pairs represent a single Hebrew letter.
[h] Vowelling could not be inferred with certainty and is therefore omitted from the transliteration. Like the Seal Names themselves, the glosses in Moscow-Günzburg 775 do not appear to have special significance in terms of *gēmaṭriyāh* (numerical value).
[i] From top to bottom, these five words constitute the 22-Letter Name of God.[190]
[j] David Tsumura.[191] Another possible translation is "island," perhaps in the sense of a refuge or place of shelter.[192]
[k] Arthur Walker-Jones.[193] Another possible translation is "mother."
[l] From top to bottom, these three words constitute the 14-Letter Name of God.[194] They are an encoded form of *YHWH ʾEloheynū YHWH*, "God, our Lord, God," from the opening of the prayer *Shemaʿ Yisrāʾel*; the cipher is commonly found in *mezūzōt*. Each letter of the original phrase has been raised by one, i.e., substituted by the letter immediately following it in the Hebrew alphabet.

[m] This translation[195] is consistent with the interpretation of אי as "island," see note j. Alternatively, the letters may be an acronym for Abraham–Isaac–Jacob, sometimes used as a charm during a difficult childbirth,[196] or the first "word" in the acronym for Numbers 21:17, sometimes used to protect against the evil eye.[197]

(a)

(b)

Fig. 2. Tables of correspondence. Rows are read from right to left. **(a)** Representative Islamic *wafq* or *jadwal*, from a manuscript copy of *Fatḥ al-Malik al-Majīd*, a work by Aḥmad al-Dayrabī (d.1738/9 CE) (author's collection). *Sawāqiṭ* denotes the seven letters absent from the opening sura of the Qurʾān, and Names refers to the Beautiful Names of Allāh (see text). The content of the table is transcribed or translated in Table 3. **(b)** Table from *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE), Comites Latentes 145, p.460; image shown by kind permission of the BGE. The content of the table is transcribed or translated in Table 4, and its likely idiosyncrasies are discussed in the text.

Tables of correspondence for the Jewish Seals are relatively rare. The content of the one found in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (Fig. 2b) is summarized in the center of Table 4. The correspondence of the planets/days with the angels agrees with Islamic sources (Table 3). However, because the planets are listed in the Chaldean order[198] (starting, unusually, with Venus) and are mapped directly to the Seals in their day-of-week order (Table 3), the correspondence of the Seals with the planets/days and angels is idiosyncratic. While the first to seventh Seals are here associated with Friday, Wednesday, Monday, Saturday, Thursday, Tuesday and Sunday, respectively, most Jewish sources suggest a normal daily sequence for the seals. Thus, for the first to seventh Seals, Moscow-Günzburg 775 speaks of "seven signs, seven days."[199] *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* spells out "day 1, day 2, … day 7,"[200] and mentions that Rabbi David ha-Cohen composed a song about the Seals: "Seven signs, seven days, an oath, etc."[201] *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* says "the duration of the act [of inscribing the tablet by an operator] should be 14 days, and each day he stamps [a Seal], and when the stamps are completed he should engrave [the corresponding Name] each day, such that he should complete all [the area] of the tablet."[202] This strongly implies that a day-of-week correspondence was usual for the Seal series in Judaism (Table 4, columns 1, 3 and 4), just as it was in Islam (Table 3), and suggests that the planetary assignments in the *Shōshān* table (Table 4, columns 1 and 5) are atypical. In support of this, a hybrid source that links each day/planet to, *inter alia*, one of the Jewish Seal Names (Table 4, column at far right) conforms far more closely to the Islamic planet-Seal and Seal-angel pairings than to those in the *Shōshān* table. The *Shōshān* table goes on to associate the Seals with various Divine Names and Formulae (Table 4, columns 7 and 8), but once again there are surprises which suggest that portions of the *Shōshān* table are unrepresentative; for example, the Seal series commences with the second half of the Tetragrammaton and concludes with its first half.[203] Moscow-Günzburg 775 does not contain any planetary or angelic correspondences, but for one Seal series it shows Hebrew letters glossed over each symbol (Table 4, columns 9-11). These will be discussed below. In the day-of-week correspondence for the Seals (Table 4, columns 1-4), the reference to "killing and reviving"[204] in connection with the second Seal (Table 1) may reflect its association with the moon, which also dies and revives.

In Islam, the Seals in canonical order (Fig. 1a,c) seem collectively to have a solar character, in that the standard table of correspondence (Fig. 2a) is called *Jadwal Daʿwat al-Shams*, i.e. the "Table of the Invocation of the Sun,"[205] and a 7 x 7 magic square of Seals which commences with this sequence forms the "Square of the Sun."[206] Moreover, in Iraq and Iran the Seven Seals are sometimes known as *Sharaf al-Shams*, "Exaltation of the Sun."[207,208] Likewise, the Persian scholar Husayn Kāshifī (d. 910/1504-5) describes a talismanic device for military victory which included the Seven Seals and harnessed the power of the sun.[209] It is possible that the enduring popularity of the Seals in Iran and Iraq arises in part from their solar aspect, which may tap into the surviving undercurrents of the Mesopotamian solar cult.[210]

Names

In Kabbalah, the first to seventh Seals (in order) are called *Y'ṭath* (יטת), *Ṭath* (טת), *S'ṭīṭ* (סטיט), *S'ṭīṭyah* (סטיטיה), *ʾAgrēpṭī* (אגרפטי), *Marōm* (מרום), and *Shamrīʾēl* (שמריאל). The main sources agree on the consonantal spelling of the Names but often have slightly different vowelling (Table 1). Moreover, *tāw*-without-*dāgesh* has regional differences in pronunciation (Table 5, note g), while the *shwā* (shown above by an apostrophe) is much shorter in modern speech than in Biblical Hebrew, potentially explaining the vowel choices in Aryeh Kaplan's transliteration (Table 1). Even more diversity can be found in *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, where for example we find five possible variants of *Ṭath*, many of which provide both *t*-sounds using only *tāw*.[211] Thus, while the transliterations above strive to be representative, they are not definitive.

It is interesting that the first two Jewish Seal Names, and the third and fourth ones, form doublets reminiscent of Gog and Magog (Revelation 20:8) or Hārūt and Mārūt (Qurʾān 2:102).[212] Possible interpretations or contrasts for some of the Seal Names are provided in Table 1. Of these, the most secure are for the last two Seals. The sixth Name closely approximates the Hebrew word *mārōm*, which alludes to extreme height as a Divine attribute (as in *ʾElōhē Mārōm*, "God on High;" Micah 6:6). The seventh Seal Name, *Shamrīʾēl*, is the name of an angelic guardian[213,214] (Hebrew *shemīrāh*: guard, protection, or shield)[215] who protects against the evil eye[216] and is invoked for safe pregnancy and childbirth.[217,218,219] Here, embodied as the seventh Seal, he personifies the all-seeing Divine eye (Table 1). Elsewhere he appears as Samrīʾēl, the Gatekeeper of Gehenna (Hell),[220] and – with no sight at all – his Jungian shadow functions as the seducer and Angel of Death, Samaʾēl / Samsamīʾēl[221,222] (Hebrew *samī*, blind).[223] The latter identity will become relevant below.

Although the Islamic Seven Seals do not bear Names in the way the Jewish ones do, they are closely associated in the Būnīan *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma* with a set of seven angel-like names known as the *Ṭahaṭīl* Names.[224] The high frequency of the letters *ṭāʾ* and *hāʾ* in the Names is what gives the series its title, but their origin is obscure.[225,226] They are included in some versions of the *Jaljalūtīah*.[227] A one-to-one comparison of the Islamic *Ṭahaṭīl* Names and Jewish Seal Names reveals possible similarities between the first four Names of each series (Table 5). One encouraging feature is the shift from *ṭaht* or *ṭath* (short *a*, inferred or indicated by vowel points) in the first two Names to *ṭīṭ* (long *ī*, given explicitly by Arabic *yāʾ* or Hebrew *yōd*) in the third Name and a variant of the fourth. With the fourth Name, an early misreading of طيط (*ṭīṭ*) as طبط (*ṭbṭ*) would have changed *Fahṭīṭīl* into *Fahṭobṭīl*,[228] with loss of the signature *a* to *ī* shift in the second syllable. In other sources, the signature vowel shift has been lost completely from the *Ṭahaṭīl* series, and all of the Name endings have become regularized to the form *-ṭahṭīl*.[229] Such an increase in uniformity over time would suggest that – if there is a genuine relationship between them – the (highly irregular) Kabbalistic Seal Names are ancestral to the (more formulaic) *Ṭahaṭīl* Names.

Table 5. Relationship of the Jewish Seal Names to the Islamic *Ṭahaṭīl* Names and other potential cognates[a]

Islamic		**Jewish**		**Hindu**	
Nomina barbara from *Kitāb al-ʾAjnās*[b]	***Ṭahaṭīl* Name** (Table 3)	**Seal Name** (dominant transliteration, Table 1)	**Seal Name** (Kaplan's vowelling / alternative form, Table 1)	**Vedic Mantra**[c,d]	**Other Sanskrit**
ṬATiya,[e,f] **ĀṬAṬ**	**LELṬAHṬ**īl	**Y'ṬATh, YIṬATh**	**YAṬATh, YAṬAT**[g]	**--TAT**	**YAT--**, **YATAT**[d]
ṬAT,[f] **ṬAṬ**	Mah**ṬAHṬ**īl[h]	**ṬATh**	**ṬATh, ṬAT**[g]	**TAT**	
SAṬĪʿ, **ShAṬAṬ, ShAṬĪṬ**	**QAHṬĪṬ**īl	**S'ṬĪṬ**	**SAṬĪṬ**	**SAT--**	**SATĪ-**[d,i]
SAṬĪʿ, **ShAṬAṬ, ShAṬĪṬ**	**FAHṬĪṬĪL** / **FAHṬ**ob**ṬĪL**	**S'ṬĪṬY**ah	**SAṬĪṬY**a	**SAT----**	**SATĪTY**a[d,i]
	Nahahṭa**ṬĪ**l	ʾAgrep**ṬĪ**	Agrep**ṬĪ**		Ākṛa**TI**[j]
	Jahlaṭaṭīl[k]	Marōm	Marōm / Mērūm	Harī Om[l]	Merum[m]
	Lakhhaṭaṭ**ĪL**	Shamr**ĪʾĒL**	Shamr**ĪĒL**		

[a] From top to bottom, the rows below headings show data for Seals 1-7, respectively. Foreign terms comprise the entire body of this table, so italicization has been omitted to make other emphases more conspicuous. The corresponding letter strings in each row of columns 1-4 are highlighted in bold capitals. In columns 5-6, the words are shown with formatting to match columns 3-4, using dashes to indicate Hebrew letters not matched in the Sanskrit. Sanskrit is transliterated using the International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration (IAST).

[b] Names from the Islamic grimoire attributed by tradition to King Solomon's vizier, Āsaf ben Barkhiya.[230]

[c] *Harī Om Tat Sat*, approximately "The Supreme Being is the Absolute Truth."[231] *Harī* refers to *Sākāra* Brahman, the physical form of God, while *Om* represents *Śabda* Brahman, the primordial vibration or sacred sound from which the phenomenal universe evolves. For *Tat* and *Sat*, see note d.

[d] In Sanskrit, *Tat* denotes the unutterable Principle or ultimate reality from which the universe springs, as enshrined in the Upanishads' *Tat Tvam Asi*, "That Thou Art",[232] while *Sat* means Truth or Being, "That Which Truly Is."[233] In the *Bhagavad Gītā*, *Yat* (Sanskrit, "which") and *Tat* are found paired as relative and correlative pronoun, respectively,[234] while *Yathā X Tathā Y* is the Sanskrit proverb format "like X, so Y."[235] In Buddhist thought, the same word *Tathā* ("thus") refers to "reality-as-it-is," called *Tathatā* or *Yathā-bhūta*;[236] the historical Buddha referred to himself as *Tathāgata*.[237] More prosaically, the Seals could be described as *Yatat*, "to be in line" or "side by side."[238]

[e] A better match for the Jewish Seal name when the order of the syllables is reversed.

[f] The co-occurrence of the pair *Ṭat Ṭatiya* has already been remarked as reminiscent of *Y'ṭath Ṭath* reversed;[239] cf. also Sanskrit *Tat / Tathya*, the Boundless All / Reality, Truth (see note d).

[g] Here the *tāw*-without-*dāgesh* has been transliterated as pronounced in Israeli rather than in Ashkenazi/Yemenite Hebrew, i.e. as a *T* rather than a *Th*, the latter being standard elsewhere in the table.[240]

[h] Cf. *Mīṭaṭrūn* from Jewish angelology; also *Maṭaṭgas* for the pupil of God's left eye in *Siddūr Rabbah*.[241]

[i] *Satī* is the Sanskrit word for a virtuous and faithful wife, while *satītya* means chastity and wifely devotion;[242] contrast these with Hebrew root *s-ṭ-y* (to deviate) and its derivative *sāṭīt*, an adulteress or wayward wife (Table 1).

[j] *Ākṛati* is the Sanskrit word for shape, figure or glyph.

[k] At one point, the *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma* (attrib. al-Būnī) swaps this name with *Mahṭahṭīl* and *vice versa*, thus aligning ***MA****hṭahṭīl* with ***MA****rōm*,[243] but this is most likely a coincidence.

[l] *Aom* in IAST, but the Hindu "sacred sound" is invariably rendered in English as *Om* or *Aum*.

[m] *Merum* is the accusative form of Mount Meru, the sacred *axis mundi*.[244]

The first four of the Jewish Seal Names and *Ṭahaṭīl* Names also exhibit apparent similarities to some of the *nomina barbara* from Islamic grimoires such as *Kitāb al-ʾAjnās* (Table 5),[245] which tradition attributes to ʾĀṣif bin Barkhiyā. In Jewish legend, Asaph ben Berachiah (1 Chronicles 6:39) was the vizier of King Solomon.[246] Hans Winkler mentions other Arabic magic words with relevant sounds – *Shaṭaṭhash Ṭahṭalash* – in connection with a particular *ʿIfrit*,[247] citing a source that is most likely the *Kitāb ʾAndahriūsh al-Bāblī*.[248] Similarly, one can find related Hebrew words listed as Divine names in Kabbalah manuscripts, such as the sequence *ʾAvōrṭaṭa ʾAkhuwrsaṭyāh ʾAṭaṭayāh N'ṭaṭayāh Y'ṭaṭayah ʾAṭāʾaṭ* found in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*.[249]

The Jewish Seal Names also exhibit potential links to religious expressions in other cultures. For example, Tat/Thath (cf. *Ṭat*/*Ṭath*, Table 5) is a son and disciple of Hermes Trismegistus, a fusion of the Greek Hermes with Thoth, the ancient Egyptian god of knowledge. Since Tat is but a variant of the name Thoth, Tat is a junior version of Hermes/Thoth himself.[250] Sat (cf. *Saṭ-*/*S'ṭ-* Table 5) is a phonetic form of Set/Seth, the name of the unruly Egyptian god who murdered Osiris.[251] The Egyptian water-goddess associated with Elephantine and the inundation of the Nile is Satit or Satet,[252] like the third Jewish Seal.[253] In India, the Hindu concept of *satitya* refers to the chaste devotion of a wife; this and other apparent matches to Sanskrit terms are given in Table 5.[254,255] The resemblance of the first Seal Name (*Yaṭat*, Table 5) to the Sanskrit *Yatat*, "to be in line" or "side by side" (Table 5, note d) accords with the expansion of the acronym in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, where the middle word (טור) means a line, row, column, progression or series (Table 1). Even more intriguingly, the sounds within the Names of the sixth and first four Seals (*Mārōm Ṭat Saṭ*) seem to reflect those of the Vedic mantra *Harī Om Tat Sat*, "The Supreme Being is the Absolute Truth" (Table 5).[256] The Seal name *ʾAgrepṭī* is reminiscent of *ākṛati*, the Sanskrit word for symbol, while *Marōm*/*M'rūm*/*Mērūm* (Table 1) matches not only the Hebrew *mārōm* ("height," Table 1) but also the Sanskrit *Merum*, which refers to the inconceivably high Mount Meru (Table 5). Finally, if the guardian Shamrīʾēl/Samrīʾēl is cognate (or was conflated)[257] with the Watcher named Shamsīʾēl/Samsapeel (1 Enoch 6/8) – "mighty sun of God"[258] – then, as in *Sefer ha-Razīm*, we find the Divine Eye equated with Helios, the "revealer of secrets… [who] sees all that happens on earth."[259,260] If so, the Kabbalistic description of the seventh Seal as the all-seeing eye of God, whom all will in turn behold (Table 1), mirrors a passage from the *Ṛig Veda*, in which dawn leads on high "the Sun, that men may see the great all-knowing god […] Before the all-seeing eye, whose beams reveal his presence."[261] On Vedic possibilities in general, we might note that Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900 CE) described the Vedas as "a work of seven seals," each of which must be unlocked by the serious scholar.[262]

Despite these intriguing overlaps with religious terms from other cultures, it seems most likely that the Jewish Seal names derive from some of the *nomina barbara* given to parts of the Divine Body in the *Shīʿūr Qōmah*, a work of Merkabah/Hekhalot mysticism thought to date originally from the seventh to eighth centuries CE.[263] Given that the

Shīʿūr Qōmah's influence percolated through to the design of magic amulets,[264] a connection with the seven talismanic Seals is not improbable. The closest matches for the seven Seal Names are to the Names of God's two eyes and five fingers (Table 6). The various manuscripts that incorporate *Shīʿūr Qōmah* material (such as *Sefer Razīʾel* and *Sefer ha-Qōmah*) present somewhat different names for the Divine features; of those published to date, the Seal Names most closely resemble the eye/finger Names in *Sefer ha-Shīʿūr*. The version of this work from which the Names in Table 6 are taken is found in the Provencal portion of a manuscript from the fourteenth-fifteenth century CE, Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) ms. 1886.[265]

Jointly, Tables 5 and 6 suggest that the consonants of the syllable *tat* and its near homophones have the following relationship, where *ShQ* stands for *Shīʿūr Qōmah*, a dashed line (---) indicates a substitution of one of the two consonants for the alternative *t*-sound, and a continuous line (—) indicates an exact cognate:

טט (eyes/heart, *ShQ*) — ططּ (*Ṭahaṭīl*) --- طت (*ʾAjnās*) — תת (Seal) --- תת (fingers, *ShQ*)

The left-hand end of this scheme implies that some Names in the *Shīʿūr Qōmah* (e.g., *Maṭaṭgas* in *Siddūr Rabbah*, Table 5, note h; *Ṭaṭaṭ* in Table 6, notes b-e) may relate more directly to *Ṭahaṭīl* Names than to Seal Names. At the right-hand end, the Hebrew prefix -תת (*tath*-) shares with the Arabic word *taḥt* the meaning of "under" (Table 1), but it could be just a coincidence that the Seal named *Ṭath* consists of three rods placed under a lance.

Before leaving the topic of the Names, we should make one further attempt to straddle seemingly disparate material. Above, it was mentioned that the goal of *Hēkhalōt Zūṭartī* is the ultimate "spell and seal that bind earth and heaven." The Jewish Seal Names may have a specific connection to this prize, in that the passage in which it is described (§367) refers to the eye of God that sees the world from end to end, naming it *ʾAṭaṭsat*.[266] This Name, which is identical to the one given to the same eye in *Sefer ha-Qōmah* (Table 6), has intriguing similarities to the sounds repeated in the first four Seal Names. Beyond this interesting juxtaposition, the reference to an all-seeing Divine Eye reminds us of the function of *Shamrīʾēl*, the seventh Seal through whom God sees all (Table 1).

Traditional uses

In Islamic tradition, King Solomon's ring – from which he derived his power over all things natural and supernatural – is reputed to have been engraved with some or all of the Seven Seal symbols.[267,268,269] The full series is also alleged to have adorned the entrance to the Kaʿba.[270,271] Islamic talismans therefore make frequent use of the symbol series, which for example recurs in a popular amulet called *The Seven Covenants of Solomon*,[272,273,274,275] effective against a Qarīna or female demon who "takes" children (*umm al-ṣubyān*) and who is identified with the evil eye.[276] The symbol series is also often repeated with regular offsets to populate "magic squares," as for example in Fig. 3. The periodicity and direction of the offset can differ from one square to the next, making possible many different patterns.[277] In contrast, Kabbalistic amulets are more likely to

Table 6. Relationship of the Jewish Seal Names to Divine Names in the *Shīʿūr Qōmah*[a]

Seal	*Sefer ha-Shīʿūr*[b]		*Sefer Razīʾel*[c]				*Sefer ha-Qōmah*[d]				*Shīʿūr Qōmah* Brit. Lib. ms. 10675[e]	
		Finger /eye		Fin-ger		Eye		Fin-ger		Eye		Finger
YIṬA<u>Th</u>	**WETA<u>Th</u>**mat[f]	F1	**YATA<u>Th</u>**	L2	**ʾAṬAṬ**nasat	2	**TA<u>Th</u>**mat	F1	**ʾAṬAṬ**sat	1	**TA<u>Th</u>**mah	R1,L2
ṬA<u>Th</u>	**TA<u>Th</u>**ṣamnaṣ	F2	**TA<u>Th</u>**maṣ	L1	**ʾAṬAṬ**nasat	2	**TA<u>Th</u>**mat	F1	**ʾAṬAṬ**sat	1	**TA<u>Th</u>**mah	R1,L2
S'ṬĪṬ[g]	**ṢaTAT**yʾel	ER			**ʾAṭaṭnaSAT**	2			**ʾAṭōṭSAT**	2	**ʾṬYṬ**ysws	ER
S'ṬĪṬYAh	**ṢaTATYʾE**l	ER			**ʾAṭaṭnaSAT**	2			**ʾAṭōṭSAT**	2	**ʾṬYṬY**sws	ER
ʾAGrepṭī	G**AG**	F3	**ʾAG**agmaṣ	L4			G**AG**at	F3			**AG**agma**ʿ**	L3
MAr<u>Ō</u>M	**MA**natbag	F4	AgagMAṣ	L4			**MA**nat	F4			**ʾŌgM**ah	L4
ShAMRĪʾēl	**ShEM**esh	F5	**ShAMRĪ**	R5							Gag**ShEM**esh	R4

[a] From top to bottom, rows below headings show data for Seals 1-7, respectively. Foreign terms comprise the body of this table, so italicization has been omitted to make other emphases more conspicuous. Letters in column 1 with potential matches in other columns of the same row are in bold capitals, as are their matches. *Tāw* with and without *dāgesh* are not distinguished in the source text, so the letter is transliterated either as *T* or *<u>Th</u>* to best match column 1. Short vowels follow Martin Cohen,[278] except for replacement of *e* with *a* in the first syllable of *Manat(bag)*. Body parts code: E, eye; F, finger; R, right; L, left.

[b] Cohen (note a) p.35-36 (ER term is for pupil of right eye); also *Ṭaṭaṭ* twice on the heart, p.32.

[c] Cohen (note a) p.94 (fingers) & 100 (eye); also *Ṭaṭaṭ* on the heart, p.89.

[d] Cohen (note a) p.146 (fingers) & 153 (eyes); also *Ṭaṭaṭ* on the heart, p.141 (and three times in *Merkavah Rabbah*, Cohen p.62).

[e] British Library ms. 10675 (Gaster ms. 187), Cohen (note a, above) p.192-195; also *Ṭaṭaṭ* on the heart, p.193. In Cohen's opinion, this tenth/eleventh century CE manuscript preserves the Urtext (p.5 & 192), which he dates to early Geonic Babylonia (p.2), *ca*. 600-800 CE. The two grey-filled cells in this column give Gideon Bohak's interpolation (published in 2017) for the name of God's right eye in "a *Shīʿūr Qōmah* tradition that was more 'primitive' than all its currently available textual witnesses."[279] For a list of all textual variants of the name known to Bohak, see column 5 in his Appendix 1; note especially the proximity of the version in his text b (= T-S NS 92.20), אטיטיה, to that for the fourth Seal, סטיטיה. Bohak (p.66) specifically mentions Rabbi Isaac of Acre – whom we earlier nominated as the person most likely to have introduced the Seals into Judaism – for his magical use of names from the *Shīʿūr Qōmah*.

[f] Cf. *W'ṭa<u>ṭh</u>* in the second edition of *Tōldōt ʾĀdām*, transcribed elsewhere as Vatath.[280]

[g] Cf. *Tītas*, an approximation of this Name in reverse, at the end of an 8-word Name for one of the seven Seals inscribed on the *meqūbal*'s head in *Ma'aseh Merkavah*.[281]

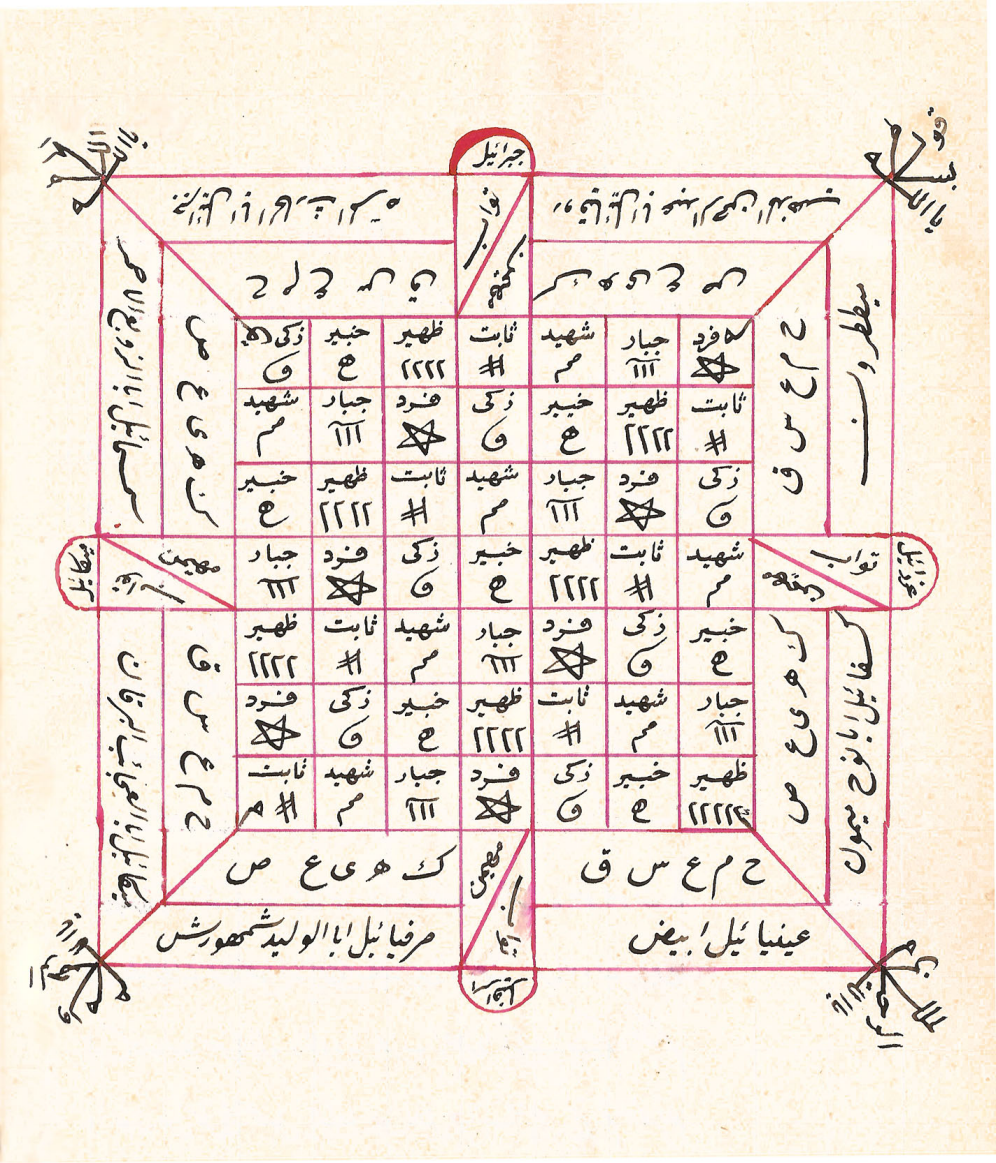

Fig. 3. Seal-containing "magic square." Talismanic design from an Ottoman Turkish Sufi journal from the library of the Mevlana Sufi lodge at Ayazma, Istanbul, written in the late nineteenth century CE (author's collection).[282] All rows of the central *wafq* or *jadwal* read right to left. Some of the peripheral inscriptions have been discussed elsewhere.[283]

employ the Names of the Seals than their symbols, and when present the latter are often much degraded, as seen in Fig. 4. Occasionally (e.g., Fig. 4c and elsewhere[284]), Jewish amulets conclude with disordered symbol sequences that display some Islamic characteristics, which suggests some (potentially quite recent) cross-cultural awareness on the part of their Kabbalist authors. Islamic amulets employing the Seals are most commonly written on a paper sheet in black and/or colored ink (Fig. 3), but the Seals can also be found engraved on silver medallions (Fig. 5a), armbands[285] and finger rings (Fig. 5b),[286,287] on brass plaques[288] and bowls,[289,290,291,292] on carnelian[293] or agate gemstones,[294] on walls[295] and doorways,[296] and even on shirts.[297] Kabbalistic amulets are typically written in black ink on small vellum scrolls (Fig. 4b).

In both traditions, the amuletic use of the Seven Seals confers protection against illness, oppression, attack or disaster. In Islam, the magical uses of the symbols include exorcism, curing epilepsy, evading execution, releasing a prisoner, winning battles, finding hidden treasure, and securing respect and love.[298] Writing the series at the end of a book will assist the reader to acquire its knowledge, a claim attributed to Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240 CE).[299] The symbols are reputed even to forgive sins.[300] Some modern amulets, whose manufacture in Mali and France was carefully documented, employ the Seals for love-magic and rainmaking.[301,302,303] Although the later *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā* advises that a different symbol series (لا ١١٩٩٩٩ لا) should be used for malevolent purposes,[304,305] al-Būnī's original *Shams* admits that the Seven Seals intimate not just goodness but suffering as well,[306] much as the associated seven *sawāqiṭ* signify not just Beautiful Names (Table 3) but also evil and harm.[307,308] Accordingly, it seems possible to use the Seven Seals negatively to punish wrong-doers or to afflict one's rivals; with them one may burn down their houses, sink their ships, make them forsake their land, and confer upon them anxiety, insomnia, blindness, diseases and death.[309] In Judaism, while "only one in a thousand knows their secret," the Seal symbols ensure the safety of a person who carries them, and protect against misadventure by water and fire.[310] Specific uses of the symbols are focused on women's reproductive issues – for overcoming barrenness and (especially) for safety during childbirth[311,312] – but they also can be hung on a ship's mast for a speedy and secure voyage, particularly when fleeing persecution.[313] A combination of Seal symbols, their Names and words from the 22-letter Name of God (Fig. 4a,b) protects against an encyclopedic assortment of ills, including fear, horror, coercion, the evil eye, witchcraft, sickness and plague.[314] Reciting the Names of the Seals inspires repentance, while amulets containing them protect the bearer against all evil;[315] they can also overcome female infertility and ease childbirth.[316,317]

It is interesting to note that Divine Names in pre-Kabbalah Hekhalot texts (mentioned above) set precedents for the protective and sometimes punitive powers subsequently associated with the Seven Seals. Thus, in *Hēkhalōt Zūṭartī*, the house within which the "Book of the Mysteries of the Divine Names" (approximated by the text of *Hēkhalōt Zūṭartī* itself) is deposited "will not suffer from fire, dearth, and all sorts of other disaster,"[318] just as a house containing the Seals cannot be burned.[319] Likewise, the possessor of the Book is able to dry up the sea, extinguish fire, and kill whomever he desires.[320]

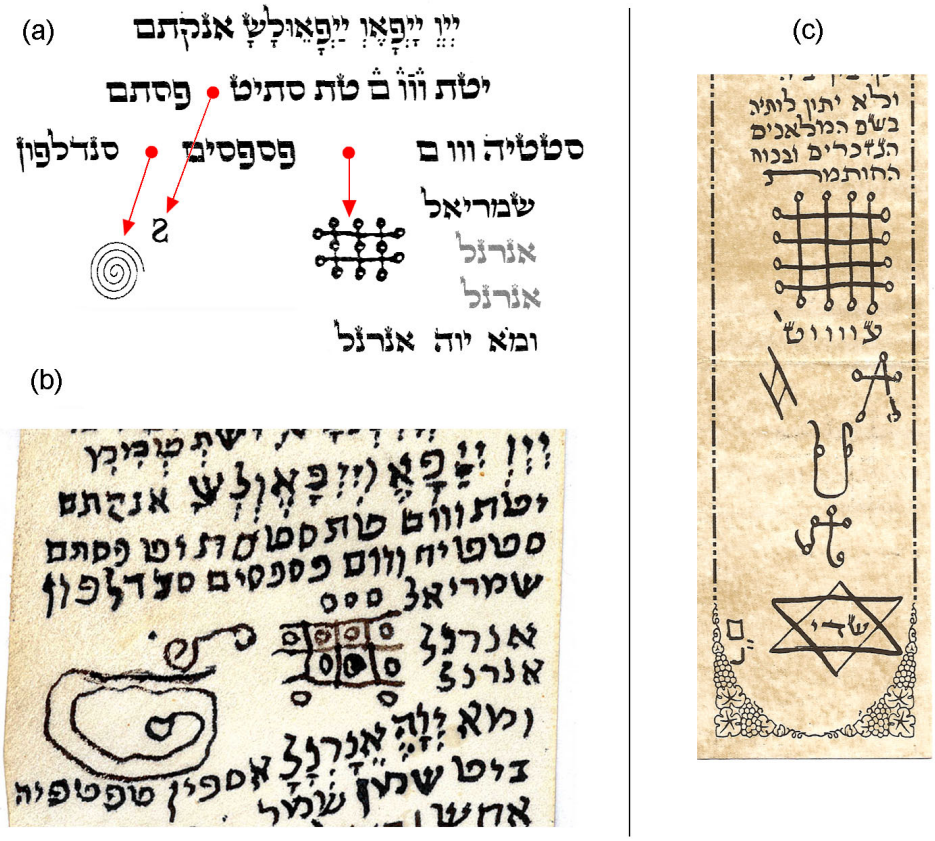

Fig. 4. Kabbalistic amulets containing Seal symbols. (a) Amuletic template from *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, an encyclopedia compiled by Rabbi Moses Zacuto (d. 1696 CE). The formula in the book is linear, but has here been presented in a layout matching that of the handwritten amulet in the panel below; this involved relocating the Seal symbols from their original positions (red discs) to new positions, as indicated by the red arrows. The Hebrew text includes five Seal names: *Y'ṭath*, *Ṭath*, *S'ṭīṭ* (line 2), *S'ṭīṭyah* (line 3) and *Shamrīʾēl* (line 4). It also includes three acronyms representing the Priestly Blessing (Numbers 6:24-26) (line 1);[321] three words from the 22-letter Name of God (Table 4): *ʾAnaqtam* (line 1), *Pastam* (line 2), and *Paspasīm* (line 3); and the name of the angel Sandalfōn (line 3). The acronym אנרנל (last line) is shown in gray at positions where it is repeated in the handwritten amulet but not in the book; it stands for "Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee" (Numbers 12:13), and is often used against fever.[322] **(b)** Detail from a protection and/or healing amulet handwritten on a vellum scroll, Morocco, late nineteenth or early twentieth century CE. While it clearly follows the template of the panel above, the degraded execution of the Seal symbols is striking. **(c)** End of an undated Kabbalah scroll, printed on paper and sold in Jerusalem, whose symbols may be derived from the Seven Seals. From top to bottom: the lattice resembles the form of the fourth Seal in the preceding panels; the central four *wāw*s of the "word" below it match the fifth Seal (Fig. 1e(i)); the row below that presents (at left) the simple form of the fourth Seal, and (at right) what could be an incomplete pentagram, an Islamic form of the first Seal (Fig. 1a(ii-iii)); below them is what appears to be a fusion of the third and sixth Seals in their Islamic forms (Fig. 1a(ii)); then a figure that may be derived from the second Seal; while at bottom is a Star of David (containing *Shaddaī*, Almighty), which would match the hexagram form of the first/last Seal in the eight-symbol Islamic series (Fig. 1a(i)). If this is indeed a Seal series, then the symbol sequence has become disordered (largely reversed) and shows some Islamic characteristics. Items (b) and (c) are from the author's collection.

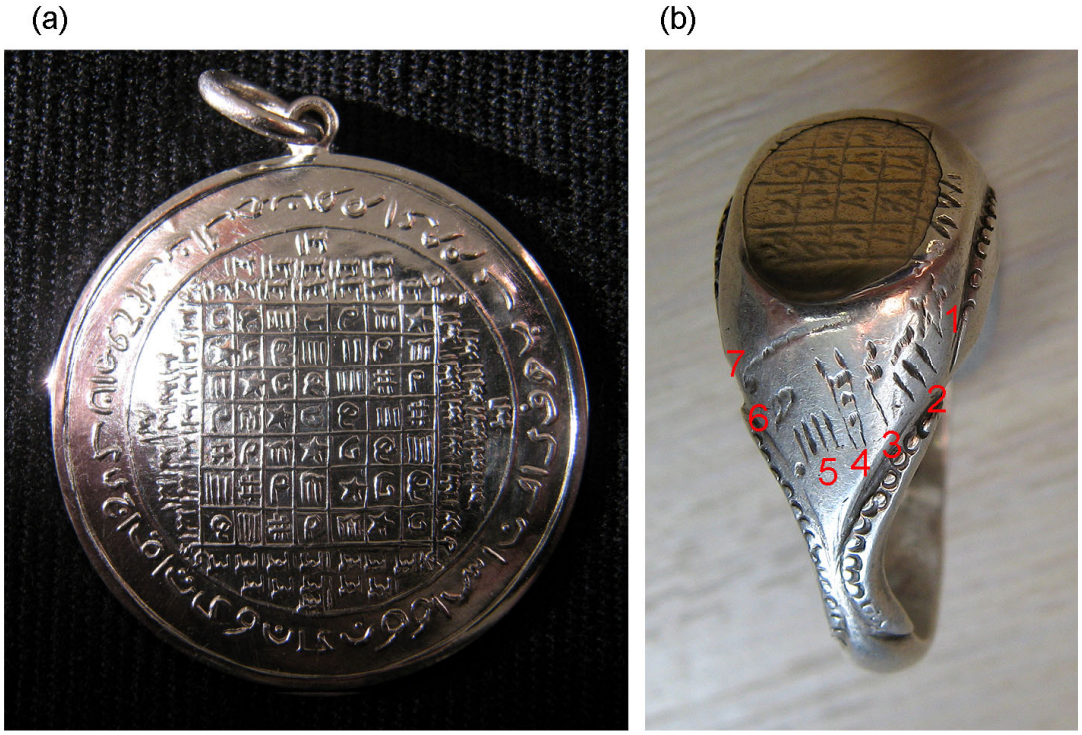

Fig. 5. Islamic silver jewelry embossed or engraved with the Seven Seals. (a) Medallion embossed with a talismanic design from al-Būnī (attrib.), *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma*, which includes a 7 x 7 *wafq* of the Seals;[323] modern, struck in Indonesia. **(b)** Signet ring from Persia, nineteenth century CE. A Seal series is engraved on each shoulder, on either side of a gold inlay bearing a magic square (value 124, presumably for Allāh as *al-Muʿīd*, The Restorer).[324] In the photograph, each Seal has been identified by an adjacent number in red. Both medallion and ring are from the author's collection.

Developments in the last two centuries

Imāmological interpretations of the Seals did not stop with Ismāʿīlī and Twelver Shīʿism (p.3 & 10). In Qājār Persia, the inverted *wāw* of the seventh Seal was subjected to complex exegetic treatments by the founder of the Shaykhī school, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāʾī (d.1826 CE), and his successor Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī (d.1843/4 CE). They concluded that the central letter in the word *wāw* (as applied to this Seal) refers to the Qāʾim, the messianic twelfth Imām. The upside-down orientation and backwards-reaching tail of the *wāw* in the symbol series is called *sirr al-tankīs li-ramz al-raʾīs*, "the mystery of the inversion in the symbol of the Ruler," and is a reference to the future re-emergence of the Qāʾim, in whose time there would be an eschatological return of "past peoples."[325] By curious coincidence, there is a grammatical construction in Biblical Hebrew called *wāw ha-hīpūkh*, literally "the *wāw* of inversion," in which a prefixed *wāw* causes the verb forms for past and future tense to be exchanged.[326] While Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī would presumably have expected the Qāʾim to be Imām al-Mahdī (Table 3), the son of the eleventh Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (d. *ca*. 874 CE), subsequent Bahāʾī exegesis identified the central letter of *wāw* (i.e., the Qāʾim) as the Bāb (d. 1850 CE) and its final letter as Bahāʾullāh (d.1892 CE), the founder of the Bahāʾī religion (Table 3).[327] In this view, the Seal symbol is an inverted *wāw* because – in terms of faith status – the messianic advent of Bahāʾullāh had caused the exalted ones to become lowly, and *vice versa*.[328]

Modern teachers have continued to extend and/or revise the correspondences of the Seal symbols. Nineveh Shadrach has presented a revised mapping of the *sawāqiṭ* to the Seals that better matches the "Beautiful Names" to the attributes of the Seals' planets.[329] N. Wahid Azal, founder and leader of the N.U.R. – Fatimiya Ṣūfī Order, has comprehensively rearranged the Seals' correspondence with the angels, planets and days and provided extended interpretations for the symbols.[330,331] He also relates the two pentagrams of the eight-symbol series (Fig. 1a(i)) to the "two gulfs" of Imām ʿAlī's *Khuṭba al-Tuṭunjiyya*,[332] while taking the six intervening Seals to represent the six theophanic stations of ʿAlī's *Hadīth al-haqīqa* (*Hadīth Kumayl*).[333]

In the USA, spiritual healer Rabbi Miriam Maron has released a music CD entitled *AngelSong*,[334] whose track titles and lyrics relate directly to the Names of the Jewish Seals, albeit with slight alterations out of respect for the power of the originals.[335] In the album notes, the Seven Seals are identified as spirits of the Seven Earths; listed in their conventional order, the Seals correspond with Geʾ, Yabashah, Ḥaravah, Arqa, Tevel, Eretz, and Adamah, a sequence which differs from the usual ones.[336] The nature of each Earth is described, along with its spiritual essence and transformative power. Her collaborator,[337] Rabbi Gershon Winkler, interprets the Kabbalistic "Four Worlds"[338] as four parallel dimensions in which we co-exist simultaneously, and sees in the four strokes of the fifth Seal a shamanistic awareness of this "Sacred Walk."[339] He uses a ceremonial drum in whose centre are drawn five of the Seal symbols.[340] In combination with a Star of David, the Seven Seals can be used in an Earth Ritual in which participants journey sequentially through the Seven Earths.[341]

In the remaining Abrahamic religion, the Judeo-Islamic Seven Seals have been mapped to their Christian counterparts on the "scroll with seven seals" in the Book of Revelation via shared planetary assignments, which for the seals of Revelation were inferred by way of color.[342] The sequence of seals is the same as in Islam, but with an offset of one position throughout, i.e. the first seal of the Apocalypse is cognate with the second Seal of the eight-symbol sequence in Fig. 1a, and so on. The "Christian sequence" is therefore given by the penultimate row of the matrix in Fig. 3 and the second row of that in Fig. 5a. The location of the "three strokes" in position 1 is consistent with Hans Winkler's suggestion that this Seal might represent the Trinity ("the Three in One"). [343] Moreover, the "four strokes" now appear in fourth position,[344] and the subsequent two Seals occupy the positions that correspond with their numerical values (*hāʾ* = 5, *wāw* = 6).[345]

Seals as letters, sounds and words

The Seven Seals of Judaism and Islam are indisputably the same set of symbols, which probably first achieved their mature form within Islam. They did so not within the image-based and largely pre-Islamic tradition of astrological magic, epitomised by the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (an eleventh century CE work known to the West as the *Picatrix*, which does not mention the Seals), but in the milieu of "religious letter-magic," a word-, letter- and number-based discipline entrenched in the Corpus Būnianum.[346,347] As we know, some of the Islamic Seal symbols are held to derive from Arabic letters, which in the Ṣūfī tradition are themselves a field of Divine manifestation. The first Seal corresponds to a transformation of the Arabic letters *hāʾ* (the original character at the start of the series) or *ʾalif* (for the pentalpha or pentagram that later came to occupy this position).[348] Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240 CE) explains that *ʾalif*, the letter closest to uninterrupted breath, and *hāʾ*, which is produced at the most interior point of the chest, are both considered to be primal.[349] In contrast, *wāw* is formed at the lips, the most exterior point of the mouth, and is thus the final letter in terms of articulation. As *wāw* requires the breath to reprise the entire journey from the centre of the chest to the pursed lips, it encompasses the power of all the Arabic letters and symbolises man in perfection.[350] Thus the seven-membered Seal series begins with a symbol based on the most primal sound and concludes with one based on the most evolved and complete sound.

There is a remarkable recurrence of parallel *ʾalif*-like characters in the second and fifth Seals; indeed, al-Tilimsānī calls them *ʾalif*s (Table 2). To Ibn ʿArabī, the verticality of such strokes is the most pertinent symbol of Divinity; "the Alif possesses a vertical movement, and due to its condition of subsistent self-standingness (*qayyūmiyya*) everything stands in existence. […] Everything is dependent on it, while it is dependent on nothing."[351] The privileged status of *ʾalif* / *ʾālef* also reflects its numerical value of 1 (unity) and its position as the first letter of the alphabet.

One Arabic source interprets the Seven Seals as "Sūryānī words"[352,353] which it translates as (Seal 1) Living One (2-3) Eternal One (4) Lord of Glory/Majesty (5) and

Honor/Generosity (6-7) He/Is.[354] Certainly, when viewed simply as Arabic letters, the penultimate and final Islamic Seal (*hāʾ* and *wāw*) together form the word *Huwa* ("He"), the Divine Ipseity or "God's Selfness."[355,356,357,358] Similarly, the Hebrew word *Hūʾ* is taken as the Name of God in some of the Jewish Merkabah texts mentioned above[359] and in the writings of subsequent Kabbalists,[360] while its component *hēʾ* and *wāw* are the central two letters of the Tetragrammaton.[361] In some Jewish series, the sixth Seal is circular (Fig. 1e(i)) and resembles the isolated form of the Arabic *hāʾ*, in keeping with the Islamic identification of this Seal as an Arabic split-*hāʾ*.[362] However, in other Jewish series the shape of the sixth Seal resembles a Hebrew *mēm* (not shown) or an Arabic *mīm* (Fig. 1e(ii)), perhaps a reflection of the two *mēm*s in its Hebrew name, *Marōm*. In printed books, the seventh Jewish Seal sometimes resembles a reversed final-*mēm* (Fig. 1e(i)). Its explicit identification in early sources as a *mēm* rather than a *wāw* (Table 1) further distances the final two Jewish Seals from the word *Hūʾ*.

The second Jewish Seal is explicitly described as "three *wāw*s" (Table 1). The same letter combination is an acronym for the genealogy in Genesis 25:14, which is sometimes used as a charm for a crying child.[363] In Hebrew printed books, the vertical strokes of the second and fifth Seals are often represented by *wāw*s, while the third Seal is sometimes represented by the letter *zayin* (Fig. 1e(i)); indeed, in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* the third Seal is explicitly identified with this letter (Table 1). In one instance, the *wāw*s of the second Seal carry vowel points, which – unusually – are supralinear (Fig. 4a, line 2) and appear to implement the long disused Palestinian vocalization scheme (eighth to eleventh centuries CE), in which the "symbol-word" would be pronounced *wo-wa-wo*.[364,365]

The purpose of the two- or three-letter Hebrew words glossed over each Seal in Moscow-Günzburg (Table 4) is unclear; all begin with *ʾālef* and have sounds dominated by the letters *yōd* and *mēm*. Rabbi Isaac of Acre spoke of visualizing an *ʾālef* at the end of each of two sequential Tetragrammatons,[366] "the silent *ʾālef* of the hidden name," so that the two Names become linked by the last letter of the first and the first letter of the second: אי. This central letter-pair of the conjoined Names is the gloss provided for the first, third and sixth Seals. Its repetition calls to mind the meditative letter-permutation schemes of Abraham Abulafia and others, which begin by exploring all the combinatorial vowel possibilities of this "word."[367] The letter-sequences above the Seal symbols also form meaningful Hebrew words, whose focus (Table 4) seems to be on the negative and conditional – cf. the "everything is nothing" of the second Seal (Table 1). It is interesting that the gloss above the first and third Seals ("No" or "Not") correlates with the mapping of *Lā* ("No" or "Not") from the *Shahāda* to the same Seals in the Fātimid Ismāʿīlī treatise, *Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam* (Table 2, columns 2 and 3).

The sounds most closely associated with the Seal series are *m*, *h*, *w* (or *ū* or *ō* in place of *w*) and, via *ʾālef* / *ʾalif* as *mater lectionis*, *ā*. The letter *mīm* is important to Islamic magic, perhaps because it both begins and is repeated within the name of the Prophet Muḥammad;[368] as we have already seen, its Hebrew counterpart, *mēm*, begins and ends the Divine descriptor *Mārōm* (Table 1). The focus on *h* (first and sixth Islamic Seals as *hāʾ*), *w* (seventh Islamic Seal as inverted *wāw*, second and fifth Jewish Seals as multiple

*wāw*s) and *ā* (second and fifth Islamic Seals as multiple *ʾalif*s, the recurring *ʾālef* in the Moscow-Günzburg 775 glosses) may reflect the fact that the corresponding sounds feature strongly in the most distinctive Names of God in Judaism and Islam (Yāhweh, Allāh), a trend continued in Bahāʾism (Bahāʾ).

Reflection and refraction of a theophany

In exegesis of the Seals we find themes common to both the Jewish and Islamic interpretations, including hands/fingers, sight/blindness, ascent to/of goodness, circles/rings/seals, and unity/duality/totality (Table 7). Sometimes the overlaps relate to the same Seal, and this is most evident when the concepts are anchored to the shapes of the symbols (e.g., the ladder, the ring, and unity/duality). At other times, each tradition associates a particular theme with a different Seal (Table 7). Most striking are the similarities in the description and associations of the third Islamic Seal and the seventh Jewish one. In this dyad, the mutilated *mīm* of the Islamic series (third seal, Table 1) is matched by a twisted *mēm* in the Jewish one (seventh seal, Table 1) (Table 7); Samsamāʾīl, the Islamic angel of the third day/planet (Tuesday/Mars; Table 3) is cognate with the Hebrew Samaʾēl (Table 4)[369] and Samrīʾēl, and thus matches the seventh Jewish Seal Name, *Shamrīʾēl* (Tables 1 and 7);[370] the third Beautiful Name of Allāh, *al-Shahīd* (The Witness; Table 3) matches the Jewish seventh Seal's role as "the observer and the seer" from whose eyes "nothing is concealed" (Table 1). Paradoxically, it is this Seal pair that also has the links to blindness and darkness (Table 7). Another form of co-identification of the third and seventh Seals is found in ms. NYPL Heb. 190, which confuses the symbols for these two Seals;[371] others do likewise.[372]

Intellectual analysis of a non-verbal theophany such as the Seven Seals can deepen our appreciation of its history and associations, but has obvious limitations. Fundamentally, the seven symbols are not signs that represent something but rather are signals – signals that do not symbolize Divine presence so much as trigger it.[373] In the words of Algis Uždavinys, such symbols "are not arbitrary signs, but ontological traces of the divine."[374] Their universality is evident from the epilogue to ʿAlī's poem, which declares the Seals true for "every creature, whether speaking or dumb"[375,376] and thus for "all men, be they Arab or non-Arab,"[377] a message amplified by the Būnīan identification of the symbols as coming from the Torah, the Gospels and the Qurʾān (Table 3). This opinion has been amplified and extended by modern authors.[378,379] As we approach the limits of reductionist logic in dissecting the kaleidoscopic reflection and refraction of the Seals within (and perhaps beyond) the Abrahamic religions, we can take comfort in the words of Mircea Eliade: "A religious symbol conveys its message even if it is no longer consciously understood in every part. For a symbol speaks to the whole human being and not only to the intelligence."[380]

Table 7. Themes, concepts or sounds potentially common to Islamic and Jewish Seal traditions[a]

Theme/concept/sound	Islamic		Jewish	
	Seal	**Attribute**	**Seal**	**Attribute**
Seal-ring	1	A seal	1	A seal-ring
		A ring (the pledge) around the believer's neck		A ring, without beginning or end
Singularity and totality	2	Singularity and duality, the One and the everything	2	Everything is nothing / unity
Beautiful / Seal Name	3	*al-Shahīd*	3	*S'ṭīṭ* / Satit
Dark female	3	To superiors, resembles a dark woman	3	(Adulteress)
Sword	3	*ʾabtar*, understood by Canaan as a sharp sword	3	*zayin*, meaning weapon,[b] sharp sword[c]
Ladder, ascent	4	A ladder; leading [up] to paradise / heaven	4	A ladder; goodness will ascend
Air	5	Moon must be in an Air constellation for use[d]	5	Air and wind
Hand	5	Fingers of hand pointing [up] to good deeds	5	(To clench the hand into a fist)
			3	A good hand / His hand is spread
			2	Work of His hands / In his hand to kill
Circle	6	Everlasting and infinite circle	6	One with neither beginning nor end
			1	A ring, without beginning or end
	6/7	Circles Circulating in knowledge	6	Master of every circle that exists; His creations revolve
Symbol shape; Angel and Seal Name; Sight, blindness and darkness; Wounding and punishment	3	Mutilated *mīm*	7	Bent/crooked *mēm*
		Samsamāʾīl / Samāʾīl		*Shamrī ʾēl* / Samrīʾēl / Samaʾēl
		The Witness		God Almighty watches and sees all
		Blind *mīm*		Samaʾēl (*samī*, blind)
		Dark station, blinded by blackness		Saturn,[e] assigned the color black
		Maiming, mutilation, sharp sword of punishment		Samaʾēl / Samrīʾēl, hence Death / Hell
Wāw	7	Inverted *wāw*	2	Three *wāw*s
Purity	7	The Pure	4	The secret is pure
Completeness	7	Completeness	5	Four sides, i.e. completeness
Secrecy	7	Back-bent because of the secrecy	3	A good secret
			4	The secret is pure

[a] To aid readability, sources will not be provided for table content taken directly from previous tables.

[b] Dictionaries of Gesenius & Klein.[381]

[c] God told the letter *zayin* the following: "I will not create the world with you, for within you is […] the sharpened sword;" Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (1885-1954 CE, author of The Ladder / The Great Commentary to the *Zōhar*), "An Essay about Letters."[382]

[d] Hans Winkler.[383]

[e] Consensus planet from Table 4.

Conclusion

While precursors of the Seven Seals may have trafficked back and forth between pre-Kabbalah and Ṣūfī schools, a mature form of the symbol series (which probably dates to the early twelfth century CE) appears to have entered Judaism from Islam. Within Kabbalah, the Seals developed an autonomous existence and gained individual Names which, to some extent, displaced the symbols. The main use of the Seals in both religions is as a protective talisman. Their scope appears to be wider in Islamic magic, where they can even be used to inflict harm on others; of course, this diversity may simply reflect their greater popularity and wider uptake in the Arab world. Appreciation of the Seals is not static or limited to the original two religions; additional associations and revisionist expositions continue to accumulate to the present day.

In both Islam and Judaism, the Seals collectively became linked to distinctive affirmations of belief, although in neither case has this linkage become widely diffused. Individual Seals are often interpreted differently by the two religions, and indeed by different schools of thought within each religion, yet points of convergence still remain. This is most evident for the fourth Seal (the ladder), but there also are thematic overlaps for the first Seal (the ring), second Seal (unity and duality/totality), and others. Unexpectedly, there seems to have been an extensive exchange between the third Islamic and seventh Jewish Seals. In contrast to Islamic practice, individual correspondences for the Jewish Seals are rarely specified and tend to be inconsistent across sources; even the relationship of the Kabbalistic Seals to the planets (and therefore to the days of the week) seems relatively fluid. In Islam, correspondences this fundamental are fixed, and variations are confined to associations that are less widely diffused.

The Names of the Seals in Judaism may be distantly reflected in the *Ṭahaṭīl* Names, a set of angel-like Names associated with the Seven Seals in Islamic magic. The Jewish Seal Names bear much more convincing similarities to the Names given to God's fingers and eyes in the Hekhalot literature, so it is interesting to see that hands/fingers and sight/blindness form some of the themes common to interpretation and exegesis of the Seals in both religions.

Finally, we should recognize that logical analysis of a visual theophany can take us only so far. Rational enquiry can enhance our appreciation of this sublime Name, but we should not forget that its true purpose is to enable the human soul to re-establish a theurgic union with the Divine.

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https://www.academia.edu/5998229/A_comparison_of_the_Seven_Seals_in_Islamic_esotericism_and_Jewish_Kabbalah.

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[1] Hans A. Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere in der Mohammedanischen Zauberei*, Geheimes Wissen, Graz, Austria, 76-195. I cite this modern reprinting by M. Munteanu rather than the 1930 Berlin edition of Walter de Gruyter & Co. as it inexpensive and still in print, unlike the original book. Note that the pagination of the original is not preserved.

[2] Tewfik Canaan, 2004, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," In: *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, ed. Emilie Savage-Smith, Ashgate Variorum, Aldershot, p.125-177, at 169-172. Originally published in *Berytus Archaeological Studies* 4 (1937), 69-110 & 5 (1938), 141-151.

[3] Edmond Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, Adolphe Jourdan, Algiers, p.155-156. A facsimile reprinting published in 1984 by J. Maisonneuve & P. Geuthner, Paris, is more widely available.

[4] Venetia Porter, 2011, "Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum," British Museum Press, London, p.166-168.

[5] M. Gaster, 1936, "Review of *Siegel und Charaktere in der Mohammedanischen Zauberei* by H. A. Winkler," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 68 (1), 131-133.

[6] Emilie Savage-Smith, 2004, "Introduction – Magic and Divination in Early Islam," In: *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, ed. Emilie Savage-Smith, Ashgate Variorum, Aldershot, p.xiii-xlxi, at p.xxiii-xxiv.

[7] Tewfik Canaan, 1936, "Arabic Magic Bowls," *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* 16, 79-127, at 96-97.

[8] Georges C. Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu (*ism Allāh al-aʿẓam*)," In: *Atti del Terzo Congresso di Studi Arabi e Islamici: Ravello, 1-6 Settembre 1966*, Instituto Universitario Orientale, Naples, 7-58, at 29, fn 29; Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.88-9.

[9] From the early version of the *Shams al-Maʿārif* found in Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) ms arabe 2647, which is assigned to the thirteenth century CE (Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.90); trans. Winkler, p.94, and Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu," 23-28.

[10] Unidentified *rūḥānī* manuscript sourced from Sidon, Lebanon; author's collection.

[11] From the amulet section of a *rūḥānī* manuscript in the author's collection, copy date 1864 CE, for protection against headache and the evil eye. Sourced from Sidon, Lebanon.

[12] The work is believed to be the *Mujarrabāt* of Sheikh ʿAbd al-Sattār al-Damanhūrī, composed in Egypt *ca*. 1855 CE. Author's collection, ms. sourced from Sidon, Lebanon.

[13] E.g., Aḥmad al-Būnī (d. 1225 CE), author of the *Shams al-Maʿārif wa-Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*.

[14] Stephen N. Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī (d. 1259/1843). *Risālah fī Sharḥ wa Tafsīr ism al-Aʿẓam*: A Treatise in Explanation and Commentary upon [a Shīʿī graphical form of] the Mightiest Name of God, by Sayyid Kāẓim al-Husayni al-Rashtī (d. 1259/1843)." Online at http://www.hurqalya.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/SHAYKHISM/Rashti..htm accessed 11 May, 2012.

[15] R. Strothmann (ed.), 2006, "*Risālat al-Ism al-Aʿẓam*," In: *Arbaʿat Kutub Ismāʾīlīyah*, al-Takwīn, Damascus, p.183-189. From Biblioteca Ambrosiana ms. H75, originally published by R. Strothmann (ed.), 1943, "Gnosis-Texte Der Ismailiten," *Abhandlungen Der Akadamie der Wissenschaften in Gottingen*, Philologisch-Historische Klasse (Series 3, No. 28), 171-176.

[16] The introduction and conclusion call for blessings upon "our master and the leader of our age, Imām al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāṣim," which corresponds with the name of the son of Imām al-Āmir; born in 1130 CE, his fate beyond infancy is uncertain (S. M. Stern, 1951, "The Succession to the Fatimid Imam al-Āmir, the Claims of the Later Fatimids to the Imamate, and the Rise of Ṭayyibī Ismailism," *Oriens* 4 (2), 193-255, at 194-202). Stephen Lambden observes that the Treatise "may be the earliest commentary on the graphical Shīʿī form of the Mightiest Name." See Stephen N. Lambden, 2009, "al-*Ism-i-Aʿzam*:

Taqi al-Din al-Kafʿami (d. 900/1494-5) on the Mightiest Name of God," online at http://www.hurqalya.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/03-Biblical-islam-BBst/GREATEST%20NAME/GN-al-Kaf%60ami.htm, accessed 10 May, 2012.

[17] Muḥammad Muḥsin Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭihrānī, 1936, *al-Dharīʿa ilā Taṣānīf al-Shiʿa*, Maṭbaʿat al-Gharī, vol. 3, Najaf, Iraq, p.203-204.

[18] Denis MacEoin, 1994, *Rituals in Babism and Bahaʾism*, Pembroke Persian Papers, vol. 2., British Academic Press, London, p.22-23, 49-50 & 145-153.

[19] Stephen N. Lambden, 2009/10, "Some Notes on Islamic Concepts of the *al-Ism al-Aʿẓam*, the Mightiest, Greatest or Supreme Name of God: From the Islamic Solomon (*fl.* 10th cent. BCE) to Imam ʿAlī (d. 40/661) and Beyond." Online at http://www.hurqalya.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/PAPERS/GREATEST%20NAME/CHAOTER%20FOUR%20-%20ISLAMIC%20LITERATURES.htm, accessed 10 May, 2012; also Lambden, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī."

[20] Wahid Azal, 2009, "The True Greatest Name (*Ism-i-Aʿzam*) Symbol," April 29, 2009. Online at http://www.iranian.com/main/blog/nur/true-greatest-name-ism-i-azam-symbol, accessed 15 May, 2010.

[21] Aryeh Kaplan, 1985, *Meditation and Kabbalah*, Red Wheel/Weiser, San Francisco, p.138 & 266; also Aryeh Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation*, Red Wheel/Weiser, San Francisco, p.169 & 172.

[22] Gabriella Samuel, 2007, "The Seven Mystical Seals," In: *The Kabbalah Handbook*, Tarcher/Penguin, New York/London, p.301. In the present paper, "Kabbalah" is used in a broad sense that encompasses all of the esoteric activities of its practitioners, including practices that more strictly might be classed as magic.

[23] The terms symbol, character and glyph are used interchangeably in this article, despite the distinctions drawn by modern specialists in typography and script modelling. See Tereza Haralambous & Yannis Haralambous, 2003, *Characters, Glyphs and Beyond*. Glyph and Typesetting Workshop, Kyoto University 21st Century COE Program, 2003. Online at http://coe21.zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/papers/ws-type-2003/017-tereza.pdf, accessed 22 Sep, 2012.

[24] The RaMaZ, *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, p.335-336 (*yōd* sign 142); see source 4 in fn 28 for bibliographic details.

[25] Moscow-Günzburg 775, f.37b, see fn 28 (source 1) and fn 93 for details; translated by www.EverBurningLight.org (Providence University). Compare the first expression with "the seven creative 'words' or utterances which brought the world into being" in ancient Egyptian thought; Robert K. Ritner, 2008, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, [Studies in Oriental Ancient Civilization 54], 4th edn., p.46-47. Compare also with the numerous references to "seven wonderful words" uttered during celestial worship in Qumran scrolls 4Q403-405, "Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice;" Florentino García Martínez, 1996, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, 2nd edn., Brill, Leiden, p.421-426.

[26] Gershom Scholem, 1949, "The Curious History of the Six-Pointed Star," *Commentary* 8, 243-251.

[27] Scholem, 1949, "The Curious History of the Six-Pointed Star."

[28] The use of a circle or square for the first Seal is seen in the 16 historical instances in the following works. **(1)** [Transl. title:] *The Functional Names, Making Amulets, Spells, etc.: Excerpts from Practical Kabbalah*, Moscow-Günzburg 775, 14-15th century CE; with thanks to Russian State Library, Moscow, and the Jewish National and University Library, Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, ms. R.R. Film No. F4194, IMHM record 000069800. Author unknown, but the relevant text (which is late relative to the rest of the document) cites Rabbi Isaac of Acre (see fn 93-94). **(2)** Joseph Tirshom, *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*, Bibliothèque de Genève, Comites Latentes 145, Collectanea of Kabbalistic and Magical Texts in Hebrew; 15th-16th century CE; with thanks to Bibliothèque de Genève (http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/bge/cl0145, accessed 2 Sep, 2012) and the Jewish National and University Library, Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, ms. R.R. Film Nos. F9273, F39891, COP22, PH3910, CD77, CD89; IMHM record 000133810. **(3)** Eliahu ben Moshe Loans and Joel ben Isaac Halpern, *Tōldōt ʾĀdām*, 1st edn. 1720 CE, Zholkva/Zolkiev, Ukraine; 2nd edn. 1872 CE, S.L. Kugel, Lewin & Co. (printed by A. Yerleger), Lemberg/Lviv, Ukraine. **(4)** Moses ben Mordecai Zacuto (the RaMaZ), 1999, *Shorshē ha-Shemōt*, Hotzaat Nezer Shraga, Jerusalem; a print version of an

18-19th century CE manuscript on Divine Names (National Library of Israel Ms. Heb. 8°2454, IMHM catalog 002561968) composed by Zacuto in the 17th century CE, but incorporating glosses by Rabbis Eliyahu Shapira (Prague, d. 1712 CE) and Abraham ben Joseph Alnaqar (North Africa and Italy, d. after 1803 CE). On these later additions, see the Introduction to the printed book (no page numbers); J.H. Chajes, 2011, "Rabbis and their (In)Famous Magic: Classical Foundations, Medieval and Early Modern Reverberations," In: *Jewish Studies at the Crossroads of Anthropology and History: Authority, Diaspora, Tradition*, eds. Raʿanan S. Boustan, Oren Kosansky, Marina Rustow, Univ. Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, p.58-79, fn 73 (p.356); and J.H. Chajes, 2012, "'Too Holy to Print': Taboo Anxiety and the Publishing of Practical Hebrew Esoterica," *Jewish History* 26, 247-262, fn 3 (p.258).

The use of a triangle for the first Seal occurs in the *Sefer ha-Razīm* section of a Byzantine manuscript: **(5)** NYPL Heb. 190, 1465-8 CE; New York Public Library, Dorot Jewish Division, catalog entry online at http://catalog.nypl.org/record=b16142874~S1, accessed 28 Jun, 2014; with thanks to the New York Public Library and the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, ms. R.R. Film No. F9347, IMHM record 000062327; p.33 in the numbering at bottom centre of the manuscript page. In the newly-released facsimile edition of this manuscript, the Seal series appears on p.65; see Gideon Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic: MS New York Public Library, Heb. 190 (Formerly Sassoon 56)*, Cherub Press, Los Angeles. This series, which occurs in a template for an amulet to prevent miscarriage, looks at first sight quite Islamic, in that it is flanked by hexagram-like symbols. Specifically, the Seal series is followed by a proto-hexagram (formed by two intersecting triangles), with a lunettised hexagram (i.e., one bearing small cicles at its vertices, in the manner of a *charaktere*) below the first two Seals and an incomplete lunettised double-hexagram below the sixth Seal. As already mentioned, the first Seal is present explicitly in the series as a small unadorned triangle, so the three large hexagram-like motifs that surround the series are probably best viewed as extraneous additions. The assembly may of course reflect some awareness of Islamic Seal series that begin and end with hexagrams or pentagrams.

[29] Mullā ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Kīlānī, 1205/1790, *Kanz al-Khavāṣṣ, Kanz al-Yahūd*. Recent printing from Iran, ed. Ḥussayn Zamīnā, no date.

[30] Stephen N. Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī (d. 1259/1843)."

[31] Scholem, 1949, "The Curious History of the Six-Pointed Star." Scholem's conclusion is echoed in Gideon Bohak, 2011, "The Charaktêres in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic," *Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis* 47, 25-44, at 28.

[32] Gideon Bohak, 2009, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Jewish Magical Tradition," *Currents in Biblical Research* 8 (1), 107-150, at 119.

[33] Steven M. Wasserstrom, 2005, "The Unwritten Chapter: Notes towards a Social and Religious History of Geniza Magic," In: *Officina Magica: Essays on the Practice of Magic in Antiquity*, ed. Shaul Shaked, Brill, Leiden/Boston, p.269-294, at 275. Wasserstrom later reminds us that work attributed to al-Būnī contains Jewish and pseudo-Jewish elements and that, in turn, works attributed to him were studied by Jews (p.279-280).

[34] Lloyd D. Graham, 2012, "The Seven Seals of Judeo-Islamic Magic: Possible Origins of the Symbols," online at https://www.academia.edu/1509428/The_Seven_Seals_of_Judeo-Islamic_Magic_Possible_Origins_of_the_Symbols, accessed 1 Dec, 2012.

[35] Savage-Smith, 2004, "Introduction – Magic and Divination in Early Islam," p.xxvi.

[36] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.77 & 151.

[37] Stefan Strelcyn, 1955, "Prières Magiques Éthiopiennes pour Délier les Charmes," *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 18, Polska Akademia Nauk, Warszawa, p.42 fn 2, citing F. Bilabel & A. Grohmann, eds., 1934, *Griechische, Koptische und Arabische Texte zur Religion und Religiösen Literatur in Aegyptens Spätzeit*, Heidelberg, p.433.

[38] Tewfik Canaan, 1936, "Arabic Magic Bowls," *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* 16, 79-127, at 96-97.

[39] H. Henry Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 55 (3), 237-256, at 244.

[40] Carl Brockelmann,1943, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, vol. 1, Brill, Leiden, p.38-39; Clèment Huart, 1903, *A History of Arabic Literature*, D. Appleton & Co., New York, p.253.

[41] Lloyd D. Graham, 2011, "In Islamic Talismans, Repeat-Letter Ciphers Representing the 'Greatest Name' Relate to an Early Prototype of the Seven Seals and may Link the Seals with the Pleiades," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Papers* 29, 70-91; online at http://www.academia.edu/1999297/In_Islamic_Talismans_Repeat-Letter_Ciphers_Representing_the_Greatest_Name_Relate_to_an_Early_Prototype_of_the_Seven_Seals_and_may_Link_the_Seals_with_the_Pleiades, accessed 1 Dec, 2012. Hereafter, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[42] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.88-9.

[43] Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," 240.

[44] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.151-2.

[45] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[46] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[47] Dorothee A.M. Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*, Georg Olms, Hildesheim, p.88-95; Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.102-5; Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.139-142.

[48] Nineveh Shadrach, 2005, *Magick Manuscripts (Arabic Collection)*, vol. 1, Ishtar Publishing, Vancouver, Preface; also eBook edition, 2010, p.2.

[49] Saʿid Nūrsī subscribed to this view; for example, see Section II.A.2.g online at http://www.nur.org/en/nurcenter/nurlibrary/Views_on_Kalam_as_Illustrated_in_the_Risale_i_Nur_212#NOTE19, accessed 1 Dec, 2012.

[50] Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.138-142.

[51] Abū Ḥāmed Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, no date, *Bahjat al-Saniyya fi Sharh Du'wat al-Jaljalūtīah*, online at www.al-mostafa.com, accessed 20 Mar, 2011.

[52] Imâm al-Ghazâlî,1987, *Celcelûtiye Duasi – Havâs ve Esrâri*, Pamuk Yayincilik, Istanbul (ISBN 9756594640).

[53] Edgar W. Francis IV, 2005, *Islamic Symbols and Sufi Rituals for Protection and Healing: Religion and Magic in the Writings of Ahmad ibn Ali al Buni (d. 622/1225)*, PhD Dissertation, Univ. California Los Angeles, CA, p.88-89; also Lambden, 2009/10, "Some Notes on Islamic Concepts of the *al-Ism al-Aʿẓam*."

[54] The term "Corpus Būnīanum" was coined by Jan Just Witkam, 2007, "Gazing at the Sun: Remarks on the Egyptian Magician al-Būnī and his Work," In: *O Ye Gentlemen: Arabic Studies on Science and Literary Culture*, eds. Arnoud Vrolijk & Jan P. Hogendijk, Brill, Leiden, p.183-199.

[55] Noah Gardiner, 2012, "Forbidden Knowledge? Notes on the Production, Transmission, and Reception of The Major Works of Aḥmad al-Būnī," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12, 81-143.

[56] For a general analysis of the *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma*, see Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*. On the tenuous nature of its connection to al-Būnī, see Jean-Charles Coulon, 2013, *"La Magie Islamique et le «Corpus Bunianum» au Moyen Âge,"* Position de thèse doctoral, Université de Paris IV – Sorbonne, online at http://academia.edu/354526/La_magie_islamique_et_le_corpus_bunianum_au_Moyen_Age, accessed 11 Jul, 2013.

[57] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.95-113. Noah Gardiner dates the copy of al-Būnī's original *Shams* (the *Shams al-Maʿārif wa-Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*) that serves as the main source for Hans Winkler and myself to the late thirteenth or possibly fourteenth century CE (BnF ms arabe 2647); the earliest version of the enlarged version (*Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā*) to 1508 CE (BnF ms arabe 2649), and other versions of the *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā* to the seventeenth century CE or later. Gardiner, 2012, "Forbidden Knowledge?" p.102-103, 114, 134-135.

[58] The relevant passage in al-Būnī's *Shams al-Maʿārif wa-Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif* is given by Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.91-92, and by Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu," 24. German and French translations, respectively, of the lines describing the Seals appear in Winkler, 2006, p.94, and Anawati, 1967, 27.

[59] *Sharḥ al-Jaljalūtīah al-Kubrā* (Commentary on the Long *Jaljalūtīah*) is one of the four books comprising the Būnīan *Manbaʿ Uṣūl al-Ḥikma* (hereafter, "*Uṣūl"*). In the widely-used al-Qāhira (Cairo) edition it occupies p.91-325. This is the edition cited by Alexander Fodor (A. Fodor, 2004, "The Rod of Moses in Arabic Magic," In: *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, ed. Emilie Savage-Smith, Ashgate Variorum, Aldershot, p.103-123), as well as by Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*, and is probably the Cairo 1951 printing by Maktabat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī (Witkam, 2007, "Gazing at

the Sun," 198). The different versions of the *Jaljalūtīah* invocation are described by Pielow, p.88-95; the short/early version appears in the *Uṣūl* at p.95-97. A German translation of the lines describing the Seals appears in Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.102-105.

[60] Carl Brockelmann, 1938 & 1949, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, Brill, Leiden; vol. II (1949) p.101 and Supp. vol. II (1938), p.95.

[61] William. B. Stevenson, 1920, "Some Specimens of Moslem Charms," *Studia Semitica et Orientalia*, Glasgow University Oriental Society, 84-114, at 112 fn 2.

[62] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[63] A.G. Ellis, 1967, *Catalogue of Arabic Books in the British Museum*, vol. 1, Jarrold & Sons, Norwich, p. 200. The Seals are mainly dealt with in Chapter 16 of the *Mujarrabāt* (Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*, p.61-64).

[64] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.151-2.

[65] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.94, 103, 151-180 & 187-192; Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," 240.

[66] Moïse Schwab comments that on Hebrew talismans the (isolated) Star of David is often found "reduced to a simple square" (Moïse Schwab, 1897, *Vocabulaire de l'Angélologie*, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris, p.21). With the first Seal, however, it is more likely that the circular Seal originally common to both religions was preserved largely unchanged in Jewish series, transforming at most into a square, whereas it evolved considerably in Islamic ones, first into a pentagram and then into a hexagram. The same applies to the sixth Seal, which in Jewish series typically remains a circle or square (Fig. 1d,e(i) and Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.172) while developing in some Islamic series into a hexagram or even an octagram (Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.152, series 16-18).

[67] For example, while speaking of the Ashkenazi interest in mysterious symbols during the Middle Ages, Gideon Bohak proposes that a medieval Jewish mystic received the seven Seals from Oriental Jewish sources and offered an elaborate explanation of each sign in an exegesis that then became widely circulated (Bohak, 2011, "The Charaktêres in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic," 37). As we shall see, the earliest extant Jewish manuscript to contain the Seal series, namely Moscow-Günzburg 775 (fn 28, source 1, and fn 93-94) is Sephardic, and thus from the far west of Europe, while the next two, namely the *Sefer ha-Razīm* section of NYPL Heb. 190 (fn 96) and the magical compendium *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (fn 28, source 2), are Greek/Byzantine and Greek/Turkish/Ottoman, respectively, and thus from the eastern boundary. An Ashkenazi epicentre is certainly possible, although the strong Arabic influence in the Greek/Byzantine *Sefer ha-Razīm* (fn 96) means that the author probably had a direct awareness of the Seals from local Islamic sources, in addition to knowledge obtained from the Rhineland or central/eastern Europe.

[68] Rodney L. Thomas, 2010, *Magical Motifs in the Book of Revelation*, T&T Clark International, London, p.127.

[69] Pierre Prigent, 2004, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 22-36. Also, James R. Davila, 2008, "The Book of Revelation and the Hekhalot Literature;" online at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/media/revelation_hekhalot_paper_SBL08.pdf with mirror at http://www.docstoc.com/docs/4832641/THE-BOOK-OF-REVELATION-AND-THE-HEKHALOT-LITERATURE-James, accessed 25 Mar, 2010.

[70] The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse are described in Revelation 5-6.

[71] Meir bar Ilan, 1988, "Jewish Magical Body-Inscription in the First and Second Centuries," *Tarbiz – A Quarterly for Jewish Studies* 57 (1), 37-50. Citations of subsections use the pagination of the 27-page English translation by Menachem Sheinberger, online at https://faculty.biu.ac.il/~testsm/tatoos.html, accessed 1 Sep, 2016.

[72] Rebecca Lesses, 2007, "Amulets and Angels: Visionary Experience in the *Testament of Job* and the Hekhalot Literature," In: *Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition in Ancient Judaism*, eds. Lynn R. LiDonnici & Andrea Lieber, Brill, Leiden, p.49-74, at 61-63.

[73] David R. Blumenthal, 1978, *Understanding Jewish Mysticism: A Source Reader*, vol. 1: *The Merkabah Tradition and the Zoharic Tradition*, Ktav, New Jersey, p.56-89.

[74] bar-Ilan, 1988, "Jewish Magical Body-Inscription," 18-23 of English translation.

[75] Lesses, 2007, "Amulets and Angels," p.67-69.

[76] E.g., Lesses, 2007, "Amulets and Angels," p.50, 60-63 & 68-69; bar-Ilan, 1988, "Jewish Magical Body-Inscription," 15-16 of English translation. For the nature and purpose of these Names, see Karl Erich Grözinger, 1987, "The Names of God and the Celestial Powers: Their Function and Meaning in the Hekhalot Literature," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 6 (1-2), 53-69, especially at 58. Note that the ancient Egyptians conceived of their netherworld in similar terms; its crossing required safe passage through seven gates staffed by guardians who yielded to passwords consisting of secret names. See, e.g., George Hart, 2005, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, Routledge, Oxford, p.57; R.O. Faulkner, 1985, *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Guild Publishing, London, p.133 (Spell 144). A similar journey, relocated to the heavens, is found in Gnosticism. For example, in the second century CE, Ophian Christians had an initiatory ritual called "The Seal," which was described by Celsus and Origen. The ritual contained seven prayers that served as passwords and gave safe passage through seven gates – each guarded by a planetary-zodiacal Archon – as the initiate ascended through the seven heavens. A key part of the prayer to each gatekeeper Archon is its Name, but many of the prayers also refer to the initiate's possession of graphic symbols, e.g. "…Archon who protects the First Gate, Horaeus! Let me pass, since you see the symbol that destroys your power with the imprint of the tree of life." See April D. DeConick, 2013, "The Road for the Soul is Thorough the Planets: The Mysteries of the Ophians Mapped," In: *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature. Essays in Honor of Birger A. Pearson*, eds. April DeConick, Gregory Shaw & John D. Turner, Brill, Leiden, p.37-74, at p.45-51 & 66-68.

[77] Lesses, 2007, "Amulets and Angels," p.68-69.

[78] Peter Schäfer, 2009, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, p.285-6 & 293-294.

[79] Samuel, 2007, "The Seven Mystical Seals," p.301.

[80] Georges Lahy, 1995, *Vie Mystique et Kabbale Pratique: Angéologie et Pratiques Théurgico-Magiques dans le Shiour Qomah, la Merkavah et la Kabbalah Maassith*, Editions Lahy, Roquevaire, France, p.138.

[81] Frances Harrison & Nineveh Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works – Practical Training for the Children of Light*, Ishtar, Vancouver, p.47-48.

[82] Wahid Azal, "The True Greatest Name (*Ism-i-A'zam*) Symbol."

[83] Rav Hūnaʾ, a Babylonian Talmudist (d. 296/7 CE). Scholem, 1949, "The Curious History of the Six-Pointed Star," 246.

[84] ʾAvrāhām ben Yiṣḥāq of Narbonne (d. 1179 CE), one of the first Kabbalists of Provence. Scholem, 1987, *Origins of the Kabbalah,* trans. Allan Arkush, Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, NJ, p.204 fn 7.

[85] Moscow-Günzburg 775 (see fn 28, source 1, and fn 93 for details), f.36a, attributes the Seals to a Rabbi Nōḥanīʾel Gaʾōn, of whom Aryeh Kaplan says "no record of such a gaon exists" (Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.370). The name may be derived from Rabbi Neḥūnīah ben ha-Qanah, a Tannaitic authority of the 2nd century CE who features in the Merkabah text *Hēkhalōt Rabbatī*; Nethanʾel ben Mosheh ha-Lewī, Gaʾōn of Fusṭāṭ in Egypt (1160-1170 CE) and court physician to the last Fātimid Caliphs; or his contemporary, Nethanʾel ben al-Fayyūmī of Yemen (d. *ca*.1165 CE). While ha-Lewī is the only actual Gaʾōn, al-Fayyūmī was head of Jewry in a culture dominated by Ṭayyibī Ismāʿīlism (see fn 16); his *Bustān al-ʿUlqūl* draws heavily on Ismāʿīlī Ṣūfism and reveals a mystical preoccupation with the number seven. Ronald C. Kiener, 1984, "Jewish Ismāʿīlism in Twelfth Century Yemen: R. Nethanel ben al-Fayyūmī," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 74 (3), 249-266.

[86] The RaMbaN (1194-1270 CE). *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (see fn 28, source 3, for details), Section 158; Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.370.

[87] Rabbi Yiṣḥāq ben Shmūʾel dmin ʿAkkō, late 13th/early 14th century CE.

[88] Moscow-Günzburg 775 (see fn 28, source 1, and fn 93 for details), f.36a, Babylon Human Translation, online service via http://translator.babylon.com/.

[89] Moshe Idel, 2007, "Jewish Mysticism Among the Jews of Arab/Moslem Lands," *Journal for the Study of Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry*, February, 14-39, at 23-24.

[90] Moshe Idel, 1988, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, p.91-101.

[91] Eitan P. Fishbane, 2009, *As Light Before Dawn: The Inner World of a Medieval Kabbalist*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA. The entire book is a study of Rabbi Isaac of Acre.

[92] *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906, online at http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8213-isaac-ben-samuel-of-acre, on the authority of Chaim Joseph David Azulai's (d. 1806 CE) *Shem ha-Gedōlīm*. Accessed 16 Jun, 2013.

[93] Bibliographic details for Moscow-Günzburg 775 are in fn 28, source 1. The Seals appear on pages in the supposedly unnumbered leaves at the beginning of the ms., in which they are assigned as folio 32a-33b or p.62-64 by Aryeh Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.370 fn 31. However, scans of the ms. from the IMHM do show faint folio numbers at top left, *recto*, according to which the Seal series fall on f.36a-37b, and this pagination is also used in the IMHM catalog entry. Accordingly, it is these page numbers that will be used throughout this paper. Five versions of the symbol series are shown in the document, and individual symbols are repeated in the text of the ms. when their shapes or meanings are being discussed.

[94] Moscow-Günzburg 775 (see fn 28, source 1, and fn 93 for details), f.37a. This Sephardic manuscript from the 14th/15th century CE contains different sections, which appear to be independent works or fragments therefrom. One section (f.39b-276a) is Rabbi Isaac of Acre's *ʾŌṣar Ḥayyīm* (IMHM record 000069801). Aryeh Kaplan treats the preceding section (fn 28, source 1), which contains the Seals, as if Rabbi Isaac were the author of that section too (Kaplan, 1985, *Meditation and Kabbalah*, p.138), yet its text (f.36a) says "I have read in the writing of Rabbi Yiṣḥaq of ʿAkko, of blessed memory," i.e. it attributes the information to Rabbi Isaac in the third person using an honorific for the dead. The IMHM catalog notes that p.33-37, i.e. the pages describing the Seals, are late relative to the remainder of the section.

[95] Moscow-Günzburg 775 (see fn 28, source 1, and fn 93 for details), f.37a. Note also that the magical section of ms. NYPL Heb. 190, the next Seal-containing manuscript to be discussed, is written in Judeo-Arabic and/or contains some Arabic passages. For other implications of this, see fn 67.

[96] Bohak, 2011, "The Charaktêres in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic," 37. The main section of ms. New York Public Library Heb. 190 (formerly ms. Sassoon 56, and given above as fn 28, source 5) is a late Byzantine miscellany of magical and Kabbalistic material titled *Sefer ha-Razīm*, thereby claiming to be an edition of the well known magic book of the 3rd/4th centuries CE (Michael A. Morgan, trans., 1983, *Sefer ha-Razim: The Book of the Mysteries*, [Society of Biblical Literature, Texts and Translations 25, Pseudepigrapha Series 11], Scholars Press, Chico, CA). This section includes Judeo-Arabic passages; accordingly, most material of non-Jewish origin is of Muslim heritage (Bohak, 2014, vol. 1, p. 12; source 3 below). In the page numbering followed by Bohak (source 3 below), the Seals appear on p.65 of the manuscript, with an interpretation (abridged relative to that in Moscow-Günzburg 775and *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām*) on p.146-147. In the interpretation, the third Seal is shown using the symbol proper to the seventh one, which is missing. The complete set of Seal Names re-occurs with vowel points on p.168, followed by an almost unrecognizably debased version of the symbols (now 11 discrete glyphs) alongside the caption צמר כר (which should read צמר כד, the last letters of the verses in Genesis 1:1-5). The complete set of Seal Names also occurs on p.254 & 256, and some of the Names appear also among other Divine Names (p.146 and 212). The manuscript was written in a Greek cursive hand between 1464-1468 CE by Moses ben Jacob ben Mordechai ben Jacob ben Moses.

Sources: (1) New York Public Library, Dorot Jewish Division, catalog entry online at http://catalog.nypl.org/record=b16142874~S1, accessed 28 Jun, 2014; *Sefer ha-Razīm* section given as p.58-258. (2) Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, ms. R.R. Film No. F9347, IMHM record 000062327, *Sefer ha-Razīm* section given as p.57-302. (3) Gideon Bohak, 2008, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p.223; Bohak, 2011, "The Charaktêres in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic," 37; Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic*. In the published facsimile (Bohak, 2014, vol. 2), the *Sefer ha-Razīm* section occupies p.58-258.

[97] Bibliographic details for the ms. are in fn 28, source 2. Versions of the Seals appear on p.141, 265, 268, 322, 323, 460 & 461 of the ms., which is numbered by page in Western numerals; the second and third citations fall within the section catalogued as *Maʾamar ha-Ayin* (On the Evil Eye) by Meir ben Eleazar. Versions of the Names (without figures) also appear on p.264, 395 & 615; the first citation falls within *Maʾamar ha-Ayin*.

[98] The manuscript Bibliothèque de Genève, Comites Latentes 145, including the *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* portion, is categorised as 15th century CE by the Library (URL as in fn 28, source 2, also http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/bge/cl0145) and by the IMHM at the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem. However, scholars more usually place Tirshom's work in the 16th century CE (e.g., Meir

Benayahu, 1972, "*Sēfer Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* le-Rabbī Yōsef Tīrshōm," *Temirin – Texts and Studies in Kabbalah and Hasidism*, vol. 1, 1st ed., Mossad HaRav Kook, Jerusalem, p.187-269; Jeffrey H. Chajes, 2003, *Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Exorcists, and Early Modern Judaism*, Univ. Pennsylvania Press, PA, p.65; Kaplan, 1985, *Meditation and Kabbalah*, p.157); most recently, Gideon Bohak has estimated it was composed between 1510 and 1530 CE (Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic*, vol. 1, p.27. On the location of composition, see Meir Benayahu, 1972, "*Sēfer Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* le-Rabbī Yōsef Tīrshōm."

[99] See fn 28, source 2, for details; the quotation is from p.141.

[100] See fn 28, source 4, for details. The Seal symbols feature on p.268 and 434, with possible additional occurrences on p.206, 617 and 646. The Seal Names feature on p.335-336 (two entries, *yōd* signs 141 and 142) and p.442, with possible variants in many other entries.

[101] Theodore Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets: Their Decipherment and Interpretation*, Behrman House, New York, p.39-40, 100-101; for its North African circulation, see online at http://www.virtualjudaica.com/Item/13496/Tofteh_Arukh, retrieved 9 Feb, 2013. See also fn 28, source 4.

[102] Jerusalem NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330/17, p.209a; with thanks to the National Library of Israel and the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, mss. R.R. Film. No. B 277 (330=8), IMHM record 002807514. The Seals appear individually in a version of the now-familiar explanation; they re-appear collectively as a canonical symbol series, and then appear again in a non-standard 10-symbol series that contains some duplication. Before we leave manuscript sources, it is worth mentioning that Bohak, 2014, vol. 1, p.189 fn 10 mentions two other manuscripts containing version of the Seal names, namely JTS Ms. New York 8114 (Italy, 15th century CE) and Bodleian Heb. g 8.3-14.

[103] Zalman Schachter-Shalomi & Natanel M. Miles-Yepez, 2009, *A Heart Afire: Stories and Teachings of the Early Hasidic Masters: The Circles of the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Maggid of Mezritch*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, PA, p.4-6.

[104] Shnayer Z. Leiman, 2002, "The Adventure of the Maharal of Prague in London: R. Yudl Rosenberg and the Golem of Prague," *Tradition* 36 (1), 26-58.

[105] Shnayer Z. Leiman, 2007, *Did a Disciple of the Maharal Create a Golem?* http://seforim.blogspot.com/2007/02/shnayer-z-leiman-did-disciple-of.html, posted 8 Feb, 2007; retrieved 19 Apr, 2009.

[106] Schachter-Shalomi & Miles-Yepez, 2009, *A Heart Afire*, p.4.

[107] As described in fn 28, source 3.

[108] Immanuel Etkes, 2005, *The BeShT: Magician, Mystic & Leader*, Brandeis/Univ. Press of New England, p.35-37. In 1725/7 CE, Joel ben Uri also published *Mifʿalōt ʾEloqīm*, a wider-ranging encyclopedia based again (albeit more loosely) on his grandfather's writings (Etkes, 2005, p.35-42). This book included an incomplete – and largely reversed – list of Seal Names, but no figures (p.77 in a 1863 CE reprint by S.P. Stiller, Zolkiev, if the title page is considered to be p.1).

[109] Both versions appear in Section 158 of the book; in addition, the Seal Names also appear in Section 92. The printed lines comprising some of the Seal diagrams in the first edition appeared somewhat disjointed, so an Appendix of corrections was added to the book; the second edition had better (i.e., more continuous) drawings and no Appendix. See fn 28, source 3, for bibliographic details.

[110] Bohak, 2009, "Prolegomena."

[111] For a discussion of the issue that cites both the RaMaZ's *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* and Joel Heilprin's *Mifʿalōt ʾEloqīm*, see Chajes, 2012, "'Too Holy to Print.'"

[112] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.94.

[113] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.103-104.

[114] Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.172.

[115] Lloyd D. Graham, 2013, "Margin of Error: A Search for Words Lost Before 1784 CE by Excessive Trimming of Folio 37 in the Kabbalah Manuscript Moscow-Günzburg 775 (14-15th century CE)," גילוי מילתא בעלמא / *Giluy Milta B'alma* (the online bulletin of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, http://imhm.blogspot.com), article gmb042, posted 7 April, 2013. Online at http://imhm.blogspot.com.au/2013/04/lloyd-d-graham-margin-of-error.html, full article PDF hosted by IMHM at https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B86tPFAsM8MDTUp2SW9EcF9pTGc/edit?usp=sharing, mirrored at

http://www.academia.edu/3238460/Margin_of_Error_A_search_for_words_lost_before_1784_CE_by_excessive_trimming_of_folio_37_in_the_Kabbalah_manuscript_Moscow-Gunzburg_775_14-15th_century_CE_.

[116] Graham, 2013, "Margin of Error."

[117] Horowitz, 1996, *The Generations of Adam*, p.375.

[118] Marek Vinklát, 2012, *Jewish Elements in the Mandaic Written Magic*, In: *Shalom: Pocta Bedřichu Noskovi k Sedmdesátým Narozeninám*, ed. D. Biernot, J. Blažek & K. Veverková (Deus et Gentes, vol. 37), L. Marek, Chomutov, Czech Republic, p.199-211, at p.205 & p.207.

[119] For the Midrash, see *Pirḳê de Rabbi Eliezer*, trans. Gerald Friedlander, 1916, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., London, p.17. For the speculation about the Torah, see Horowitz, 1996, *The Generations of Adam*, p.370.

[120] Scholem, 1987, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, p.422-425.

[121] E.g., online at http://paripoornasanathana.org/ru/node/46, accessed 2 Jul, 2012.

[122] David Godwin & Aleister Crowley, 1994, *Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia: A Complete Guide to Cabalistic Magick*, 3rd ed., Llewellyn Worldwide, St. Paul, MN, p.162, 299 & 604.

[123] Ernest Klein, 1987, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English*, Carta Jerusalem & University of Haifa, Israel, p.721.

[124] Charles G. Häberl, 2009, "The Production and Reception of a Mandaic Incantation," In: *Afroasiatic Studies in Memory of Robert Hetzron*, Proceedings of the 35th Annual Meeting of the North American Conference on Afroasiatic Linguistics, ed. Charles G. Häberl, Cambridge Scholars, Newcastle, 130-148, at 142-143.

[125] Narrated by Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book 37, no. 6644. Online at http://islamqa.info/en/ref/46683, accessed 4 Jan, 2013.

[126] Horowitz, 1996, *The Generations of Adam*, p.362

[127] Ludwig Köhler & Walter Baumgartner, 1995, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, Brill, Leiden, p.750.

[128] Daniel Miller, 2010, "Another Look at the Magical Ritual for a Suspected Adulteress in Numbers 5:11-31," *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 5 (1), 1-16.

[129] Yaʿacov Levy, ed., 1995, *Oxford English-Hebrew/Hebrew-English Dictionary*, Kernerman/Lonnie Kahn, Jerusalem, p.215.

[130] *Zōhar* 1:31a, *Tosefta*; Fishbane, 2009, *As Light Before Dawn*, p.138 fn 42.

[131] The parenthetical material is prefaced by the acronym אאב״א, presumably for אמר אב"א ("ʾAb"a says…") at the start of his glosses, Abraham Alnaqar habitually identifies himself as ʾAb"a bar Yōʾel, as explained in IMHM records 000062654 and 000077375.

[132] Graham, 2013, "Margin of Error."

[133] Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, *Olat Reʾiyah*, vol. 1, Mossad HaRav Kook, Jerusalem, p.409.

[134] Graham, 2013, "Margin of Error."

[135] Isaiah Horowitz, 1996, *The Generations of Adam*, trans. Miles Krassen, Paulist Press, New York, NY, p.369-372.

[136] Stevenson, 1920, "Some Specimens of Moslem Charms," p.114.

[137] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.192.

[138] Gabriella Samuel, 2007, "Ayin," In: The Kabbalah Handbook, Tarcher/Penguin, New York/London, p.44-45.

[139] As when the *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā* enumerates as "six letters" the sixth and seventh Seals plus the four strokes of the fifth Seal. See Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.105, and Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," 243.

[140] R. Strothmann (ed.), 2006, "*Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam*," p.185, and Stephen N. Lambden, 2009, "*al-Ism-i-Aʿẓam*: Taqi al-Din al-Kafʿami (d. 900/1494-5) on the Mightiest Name of God."

[141] R. Strothmann (ed.), 2006, "*Risālat al-Ism al-Aʾẓam*," p.185.

[142] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.104; Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," 243; Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī."

[143] Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī."

[144] Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī."

[145] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.95; Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu," p.28.

[146] Arun Singh, 2012, *A Primer on a Shi'ite System for the Mystical Exegesis of the Qur'an by Means of the Seven Great Letters as Espoused by Abû Ya'qûb al-Sijistânî in his Kitâb al-Iftikhâr*, Buzurg Omid Publications, London, Kindle Edition, fn 2, 15 and 16.
[147] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.105-111.
[148] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.115-116; examples of al-Tilimsānī's symbol series are numbers 17 & 18 on p.152.
[149] Stevenson, 1920, "Some Specimens of Moslem Charms,"114.
[150] Deeb al-Khudrawi, 2004, *Dictionary of Islamic Terms*, al-Yamamah, Damascus, p.40.
[151] John Penrice, 2006, *A Dictionary and Glossary of the Qurʾān*, The Other Press, Kuala Lumpur, p.21: al-Khudrawi, 2004, *Dictionary of Islamic Terms*, p.40
[152] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.152 & 188.
[153] The RaMaZ; see fn 28, source 4, for details. Entry on p.335-336 (*yōd* sign 142).
[154] Fishbane, 2009, *As Light Before Dawn*, p.247. The seven Seal Names are mentioned as a holy Name engraved on a crown in NYPL Heb. 190 (Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic,* vol. 2, p.254) and as "a holy Name against the upper crown" by the RaMaZ (see fn 28, source 4, for details), entry on p.335 (*yōd* sign 141).
[155] The RaMaZ; see fn 28, source 4, for details. Entries on p.335 (*yōd* sign 141) & p.442 (*sāmeq* sign 16)
[156] Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.154-161.
[157] E. A. Wallis Budge, 1978, *Amulets and Superstitions*, Dover, New York, p.40-43. I cite this reprinting of the 1930 original as it is much more readily available.
[158] Jack Goody, 1968, "Introduction," In: *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. Jack Goody, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p.18.
[159] Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.170-171.
[160] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.94 fn 1.
[161] Lloyd D. Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing: Disconnected Letter Series in Islamic Talismans." Online at https://www.academia.edu/516626/Qur%CA%BE%C4%81nic_Spell-ing_Disconnected_Letter_Series_in_Islamic_Talismans, accessed 15 Dec, 2012; print published in 2013 in *Clavis – Journal of Occult Arts, Letters and Experience* 2 (Ouroboros/Three Hands Press).
[162] Abī Maʿshar, cited by Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.171.
[163] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.254.
[164] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.194.
[165] E.g. the diagram in Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.125; also al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.176, reproduced in Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*, p.81.
[166] Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.171.
[167] Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu," p.27.
[168] Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.159.
[169] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.95.
[170] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p. 93.
[171] *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.177, reproduced by Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*, p.52. There, the secondary letters are aligned correctly with the initial letters of the *Ṭahaṭīl* Names, but the two sets of letters have been aligned with a corrupt Seal sequence (which reads left-to-right and also has the third and fifth Seals swapped). See Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing," p.21.
[172] Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.171.
[173] Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.171.
[174] Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu," p.25.
[175] Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.154, after correcting the order of the Seals in the top row of his table. On this amendment, see Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."
[176] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.174, 254, 256, 259 & 264.
[177] Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.47.
[178] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.105.
[179] R.G. Anderson, 1908, "Medical Practices and Superstitions Amongst the People of Kordofan" [Kurdufan, Sudan], In: *Third Report of the Wellcome Medical Laboratories at the Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum*. Baillibre Tindall & Cox, London, p.281-324. Online at http://www.archive.org/stream/reportwellcomet00unkngoog/reportwellcomet00unkngoog_djvu.txt , accessed 4 Jan, 2013.

[180] Canaan, 1936, "Arabic Magic Bowls," 96.
[181] Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," 143.
[182] Arun Singh, 2012, *A Primer on a Shi'ite System*, Kindle location 480-492 of 1377.
[183] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.264.
[184] Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.47.
[185] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.254, 256 & 259; also (from another book within the *Uṣūl*) Ahmed Al-Buni [attrib.], trans. Nineveh Shadrach, "Berhatiah – Ancient Magick Conjuration of Power," Ishtar, Vancouver, 2012, p.114.
[186] E.g., ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ al-Sayyid al-Tūkhī (printed, *ca*. 1970 CE) *Ighāthat al-maẓlūm fī kashf ʾasrār al-ʿulūm*, al-Maktabat al-Thaqafiyya, Beirut, p.13; also, see online at http://en.roohanialoom.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Hajabmubarak-judool1.png, accessed 25 Apr, 2012.
[187] The relevant information is included in "Les Sept Archontes" (19 Aug, 2011), online at http://the-visionnaire.over-blog.com/article-les-7-archontes-81900585.html, accessed 20 Sep, 2012.
[188] Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.172.
[189] Cited by Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.168 (Table 31, line F).
[190] Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets*, p. 97.
[191] David T. Tsumura, 1978, "The Vetitive Particle אַל and the Poetic Structure of Proverb 31:4," *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 4, 23-31.
[192] Ernest Klein, 1987, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary*, p.20.
[193] Arthur Walker-Jones, 2003, *Hebrew for Biblical Interpretation*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, p.227.
[194] Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets*, p.97.
[195] Ludwig Köhler & Walter Baumgartner, 1994, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, Brill, Leiden, p.38.
[196] Abraham Green, 2004, *Judaic Artifacts: Unlocking the Secrets of Judaic Charms and Amulets*, Astrolog Publishing House, Hod Hosharon, Israel, p.6.
[197] Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets*, p.130.
[198] Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon; Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.234-235. The Chaldean order (without Mercury) is found among the minor variants listed in the *Shaʿar ha-Kōkhāvīm* of Rabbi Hayyim Vital (d. 1620 CE), but it contains no support for such a sequence to start with Venus, nor for the sequence at the far right of Table 4. See Rabbi Yosef Cohen (trans.), in Mihai Vârtejaru (2013) "Gate of the Stars: A Short Magical Treatise," in Studies on Magic, 3 April, online at http://studies-vartejaru.blogspot.com.au/2013/04/gate-of-stars-short-magical-treatise.html, accessed 9 Apr, 2013.
[199] Moscow-Günzburg 775 (see fn 28, source 1, and fn 93 for details), f.36a. Literally, "seven signs seven daily."
[200] *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (see fn 28, source 2, for details), p.323.
[201] *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (see fn 28, source 2, for details), p.141; translated by www.EverBurningLight.org (Providence University).
[202] *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (see fn 28, source 3, for details), from Section 158, translated by Byron Seminars Ltd., Yanveh, Israel. Explanatory additions by the translator are in square brackets.
[203] Moreover, *YH* and *VH*, which are usually considered the seals of the sixth and seventh days (Friday and Saturday), although not necessarily in that order, are here mapped to the first and sixth days (Sunday and Friday), respectively. See Idel, 1988, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 51-52.
[204] The "kill and revive" formula also appears (with an echo in paraphrase) in a magical handbook from the Cairo Genizah, Jewish Theological Society of America ENA 2124.28, page 1b lines 2-5: "God […] brings out his people from fire, He redeems and rescues, kills and revives, lowers and raises… pours the dew, revives the dead;" Ortal-Paz Saar, 2007, "Success, Protection and Grace: Three Fragments of a Personalized Magical Handbook," *Ginzei Qedem* 3, 101-135, at 107 & 110. Although not mentioned by Saar, the first few of the pairings cited here seem to derive from 1 Sam 2:6-8, the last pairing from Isa 26:19.
[205] Geert Mommersteeg, 1988, "'He has Smitten her to the Heart with Love.' The Fabrication of an Islamic Love-Amulet in West Africa," *Anthropos* 83, 501-510, at 505. Also Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.155-155 (where the Seals are printed in the wrong order; see Graham, 2011, "In Islamic Talismans,

Repeat-Letter Ciphers…," Fig. 1f). Doutté gives an extract from the oral Invocation of the Sun, which relates to Sura 91 of the Qurʾān, on p.133-135.

[206] E.g., Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.257

[207] Alexander Fodor, 1987-8, "A Group of Iraqi Arm Amulets (Popular Islam in Mesopotamia)," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5/6 (Gli Arabi nella Storia: Tanti Popoli una Sola Civiltà), 259-277, at 266-267. "Exaltation" in its true sense is a technical term from astrology; its modern/lay translation is usually "honor" or "dignity."

[208] In relation to Iran, see online at http://www.realitysandwich.com/fatimiya_sufi_ayahuasca.

[209] Pierre Lory, 2003, Kâshifî's Asrâr-i Qâsimî and Timurid Magic, *Iranian Studies* 36 (4), 531-541.

[210] Fodor, 1987-8, "A Group of Iraqi Arm Amulets."

[211] *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* (see fn 28, source 4, for details), p.24, 132, 362, 395, 409 & 435.

[212] Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.142.

[213] Joshua Trachtenberg, 1939, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, Behrman's Jewish Book House, New York, p.99.

[214] W.L. Nash, 1906, "A Hebrew Amulet against Disease," *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 28, 182-184.

[215] Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets*, p.122

[216] Gustav Davidson, 1967, *A Dictionary of Angels, Including the Fallen Angels*, Free Press/Simon & Schuster Inc., New York, p.271.

[217] Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets*, p.62-63.

[218] Michele Klein, 1998, *A Time to be Born*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, p.112.

[219] Margaretha Folmer, 2007, "A Jewish Childbirth Amulet for a Girl," In: *Studies in Hebrew Literature and Jewish Culture* (Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Thought, vol. 12), eds. Martin F. J. Baasten & Reinier Munk, Springer, Dordrecht, p.41-56, at p.48.

[220] Howard Schwartz, 2004, *The Tree of Souls: The Mythology of Judaism*, Oxford Univ. Press, New York, p.240-241.

[221] Davidson, 1967, *A Dictionary of Angels*, p.255.

[222] The Corpus Būnīanum confirms the identification of Samāʾīl with Samsamāʾīl (Canaan, 2004, "Decipherment," p.137), and each name (or its Hebrew cognate) is associated with the same planet/day (Mars/Tuesday) in Tables 3 and 4. Note that Samaʾēl is a late Rabbinical variant of Sātānaʾēl (Zdenko Zlatar, 2007, *The Poetics of Slavdom: The Mythopoeic Foundations of Yugoslavia*, vol. 2, Peter Lang, New York, p.522); from the Amoraic period onward, Samaʾēl was the major name of Satan (the Devil) in Judaism (Gershom Scholem, 2008, "Samael," online at the following URL, accessed 10 Feb, 2013: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0017_0_17378.html). See also Andrei A. Orlov, 2011, *Dark Mirrors: Azazel and Satanael in Early Jewish Demonology*, SUNY Press, Albany, NY.

[223] This etymology was preserved in various Jewish and non-Jewish sources until the Middle Ages; see Scholem, 2008, "Samael."

[224] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details); p.174, 177, 179, 181, 254, 256, 259 & 264 show the Names or their acronym, LMQFNJL.

[225] Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.47 & 238-239.

[226] Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing."

[227] E.g., Shadrach, 2005, *Magick Manuscripts,* ms 1 (p.8 in eBook, 2010); Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing, " Fig. 8.

[228] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.264, and Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.47.

[229] E.g., al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.179; *Asmāʾ al-Tahāṭīl*, King Saud Univ. ms (indexed as 858, ١٢٢,٤.أ); Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing," Fig. 8; and similar in Stevenson, 1920, "Some Specimens of Moslem Charms," 102-103.

[230] Pseudo-Asaph Ben Berechiah, 2009, *Grand Key of Solomon the King*, Ishtar, Vancouver, p.19, 36, 69, 87, 92, 147 & 160.

[231] Osho [Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh], 1989, *Hari Om Tat Sat: The Divine Sound That Is the Truth*, Rebel Publishing House GmbH.

[232] *Chandogya Upanishad* 6.8.7. This work is a "primary Upanishad" dating to the mid-first millennium BCE, and the declaration (which is repeated in the source text) is one of the "Grand Pronouncements"

of Vedantic Sanatana Dharma. It means that the Self – in its original, pure, primordial state – is identifiable with the Ultimate Reality that is the ground of all being and origin of all phenomena.

[233] As in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* 1.3.28.

[234] *Bhagavad Gītā* 17:28; Graham M. Schweig, 2007, *Bhagavad Gītā: The Beloved Lord's Secret Love Song*, HarperOne, New York, p.218 & fn 3.

[235] Monier Monier-Williams, 2005, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary: Etymologically and Philologically Arranged with Special Reference to Cognate Indo-European Languages*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers (reprint of a corrected version of the 1899 edition), Delhi, p.433.

[236] Dan Lusthaus, 2002, *Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch'eng Wei-shih Lun*, RoutledgeCurzon, London, p.255.

[237] Bhikkhu Bodhi, ed., 2005, *In the Buddha's Words – An Anthology of Discourses from the Pāli Canon*, Wisdom Publications, Somerville MA, p.381-382.

[238] Monier-Williams, 2005, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p.84 & p.840-841.

[239] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[240] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[241] Cohen, 1985, *The Shīʿur Qomah*, p.46.

[242] Banani Mukhia, 1994, *Women and Family in Bengali Fiction in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century*, PhD Dissertation, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, p.26, 43, 44, 63 & 76. Online at http://dspace.vidyanidhi.org.in:8080/dspace/bitstream/2009/816/3/JMI-1994-081-2.pdf , accessed 4 Jan, 2013.

[243] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.177; see also fn 171.

[244] E.g., *Mahābhārata*, Harivamsa Parva 1.11.2 (online at http://mahabharata-resources.org/harivamsa/hv_1_11.html); also Sarvajna's saying in *Harī Jana Kaṇḍa* (online at http://nitaaiveda.com/All_Scriptures_By_Acharyas/Bhaktisiddhanta_Sarasvati_Thakura/Brahmana___Vaishnava/The_Devotees_of_Hari/Hari_Jana_Kanda.htm). Both online sources accessed 4 Jan, 2013.

[245] Available in translation as pseudo-Asaph Ben Berechiah, 2009, *Grand Key of Solomon the King*, Ishtar, Vancouver.

[246] *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906, entry online at http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1877-asaph-ben-berechiah, accessed 10 Feb, 2013.

[247] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.207.

[248] *Kitab ʾAndahriūsh al-Bāblī*, King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Serial Number 12764, Conservation number 2630-FB. Although this compendium seems chronologically to be much too late, one cannot help wondering if the eponymous Babylonian is not the elusive "Handrius" whose unnamed student is, in some circles, reputed to have been the originator of the *Ṭahaṭīl* Names (Harrison & Shadrach, 2005, *Magic That Works*, p.47). Another possibility is offered by the the 10th century Catalonian corpus of astrological treatises called the *Alchandreana* , whose contents are based mainly on Arabic sources (David Juste, 2007, *Les* Alchandreana *Primitifs – Étude sur les plus Anciens Traités Astrologiques Latins d'Origine Arabe* (Xe Siècle), [Brill's Studies in Inellectual History 152 / Brill's Texts and Sources in Intellectual History 2], Brill, Leiden). Since medieval authors such as William of Malmesbury refer to "Alhandreus" as the supposed author of the corpus [E. R. Truitt (2015) *Medieval Robots: Mechanism, Magic, Nature, and Art*, Univ. Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, p.77], it is easy to see how this might have been deconstructed to yield the mythic personage of al-Handreus or Handrius.

[249] *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* (see fn 28, source 2, for details), p.230.

[250] John Walbridge, 2001, *The Wisdom of the Mystic East: Suhrawardi and Platonic Orientalism*, State University of New York Press, New York, p.18; G.R.S. Mead, 1906, *Thrice-Greatest Hermes – Studies in Hellenistic Theosophy and Gnosis*, vol. 1, Theosophical Publishing Society, London & Benares, p.461-462.

[251] Merriam-Webster, 1995, Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature, Springfield, MA,. p.1015. The foundational pillar important in the resurrection of Osiris, the god of death, after his murder by Seth was formerly transliterated as *Tat*, but is nowadays rendered *Djed*. For the older form, see E.A. Wallis Budge, 1895, *The Book of the Dead – The Papyrus of Ani*, Dover, UK, p.301-302 (translation of the papyrus, Plate XIII); James G. Frazer, 2003, *Adonis Attis Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion*, Kessinger Publishing (reprint of Part IV of *The Golden Bough, A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd ed., 1906), p.108-109.

[252] Hart, 2005, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, p.140-141; Richard H. Wilkinson, 2003, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, London, p.164-166.

[253] Sopdet, a similarly-named goddess who – like Satet – is associated with Elephantine and the annual inundation, is the deification of the star Sirius. The heliacal rising of Sirius is followed by the flooding of the Nile, which presumably explains why elements of the temple of Satet at Elephantine were aligned with the position of this star. Despite their similarities, Sopdet and Satet (Sothis and Satis in Greek) are typically considered as separate goddesses [Richard H. Wilkinson, 2003, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, London:, p.166-168; Hart, 2005, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, p.151-152]. Perhaps this is because the hieroglyphic forms of their names are quite distinct. Many orthographies of Satet (*stt*) draw upon the verbal root *st(i)*, meaning to pour out, shoot, throw, etc., no doubt a reference to the mythical origin of the Nile's waters at Elephantine [Raymond O. Faulkner, 1988, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, Griffith Institute, Oxford, p.224, 252-253 & 256]. However, from the Late Period, if not earlier, there does seem to be an identification of Satet with Sopdet. [R. A. Wells, 1985, "Sothis and the Satet Temple on Elephantine: A Direct Connection," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 12, 255-302, at 258-259].

[254] Affinities between Hinduism and Judaism have been explored in depth by Barbara A. Holdrege, 1996, *Veda and Torah: Transcending the Textuality of Scripture*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York.

[255] The Hebrew Bible contains words of Indian origin and, in medieval times, there are mentions of India as a source of spiritual wisdom in the texts of Saadia Gaon, Maimonides, Ibn Ezra and the *Sefer ha-Ḥayyim*. See Chaim Rabin, 1994, "Lexical Borrowings in Biblical Hebrew from Indian Languages as Carriers of Ideas and Technical Concepts," In: *Between Jerusalem and Benares: Comparative Studies in Judaism and Hinduism*, ed. Hananya Goodman, SUNY Press, Albany, NY, p.25-32; Hananya Goodman, "Introduction: Judaism and Hinduism: Cultural Resonances," In: *Between Jerusalem and Benares* (details above), p.1-14, at p.5. Indian connections for the Islamic seven Seals are mentioned by J. McG. Dawkins, 1944, "The Seal of Solomon," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 76 (3-4), 145-150; Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[256] One need not be overly preoccupied with exact letter cognates, such as the *t*-sounds. Variations in Hebrew consonantal spelling have already been noted; in addition, near-homophonic letter substitutions are common in Semitic magic (Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing") and even greater latitude would be required for loan-words from a non-Semitic language such as Sanskrit.

[257] Circumstantial evidence for such equivalence is found in Table 6 in respect of the various *Shīʿūr Qōmah* Names for God's fourth/fifth finger; the first syllables of *Shamrīʾēl* are in one source found in the Name *Shamrī* (cf. Hebrew *shemīrāh*, guard), while in two others the match is to the Name *Shemesh* (Hebrew *shemesh*, sun). Likewise, in *Shōshān Yesōd ha-ʾŌlām* we find that *Shamrīʾēl* (the seventh Seal) has been assigned to the sun (Table 4). There is also an amuletic precedent from 1468 CE (ms. New York, New York Public Library, Dorot Jewish Division, Heb. 190) in which an invocation for the cure of all diseases consists of angelic Names with *Shamshīʾēl* in the seventh and final position; see Pinchas Roth & Eytan Zadoff, 2012, "'Smamit and Her Children': An Unpublished Silver Aramaic Amulet," online at http://www.academia.edu/1739892/smamit, accessed 16 Feb, 2013, and cited by Steven Fine, 2011, "Jewish Identity at the Limus: The Earliest Reception of the Dura Europos Synagogue Paintings," In: *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Erich S. Gruen, Getty research Institute, Los Angeles, p.289-306, at p.305-306 (fn 65).

[258] Davidson, 1967, *A Dictionary of Angels*, p.271. Some Merkabah/Hekhalot passages describe the sun as an angel of God with " three letters of the Divine Name written on its core" (bar-Ilan, 1988, "Jewish Magical Body-Inscription"). Similar to this is the *Jaljalūtīah*-related belief that the Greatest Name of Allāh is inscribed on the heart of the sun, without which it cannot shine, and on the bodies of the angels, without which they have no power (Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.139; Imâm al-Ghazâlî,1987, *Celcelûtiye Duasi*, p.8-9).

[259] Philip S. Alexander, 2003, "*Sefer ha-Razim* and the Problem of Black Magic in Early Judaism," In: *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon*, (Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series vol. 245), ed. Todd E. Klutz, Continuum/T&T Clark International, London, p.170-190, at 180-184. The "widespread equation of Iahwe and Helios" is

remarked by Sencan Altinoluk & Nilüfer Atakan (2014) "Abrasax – A Magical Gem in the Istanbul Archaeological Museums," *Anatolia Antiqua* 22, 219-223, at 222.

[260] Omniscience is the property of all-knowing gods who are all-seeing because they are luminous celestial bodies [Raffaele Pettazzoni & H. J. Rose, 1956, *The All-Knowing God: Researches into Early Religion and Culture*, Methuen & Co., London, p.9]. The searching of hearts and knowing of all thoughts (Table 1, Jewish description of and expansion for the seventh Seal) are capabilities associated with the solar deity as early as the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt; for example, the Eulogy of Neferhotep (TT49) imputes to the king – the earthly image of the sun-god – just such powers, accompanied by solar imagery [Norman de Garis Davies, 1933, *The Tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes*, Arno Press, New York, plate 1.XI–XII]. On the theme of divine knowledge and searching of hearts, Aurelian Botica writes that "the object of the verbs 'testing/examining' is the inward thoughts and intentions [… and] scholars have pointed out parallels between this motif in the Bible and in the ancient Near Eastern texts; in particular, texts depicting the solar deities and the 'weighing of the heart' in Egyptian religion" [Aurelian Botica, 2014, "'The All-Knowing God.' Old Testament and Hellenistic Metaphors in the Genre of New Testament Apocalyptic," *Caesura* 1.2, 3-19, at 7]. Like the Greek Helios, the Roman sun-god (Sol) was seen as "the all-knowing and the revealer of hidden and secret things," cf. in Table 1, Shamrīʾēl/Samrīʾēl is characterised as "revealing all the deep and secret things" [Gaston H. Halsberghe, 1972, *The Cult of Sol Invictus*, Brill, Leiden, p.35].

[261] William J. Wilkins, 1900, *Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Puranic*, 2nd ed., W. Thacker & Co., London & Calcutta, p.32.

[262] Jason Ānanda Josephson , 2013, "God's Shadow: Occluded Possibilities in the Genealogy of 'Religion,'" *History of Religions* 52 (4), 309-339, at 329.

[263] Martin S. Cohen, 1985, *The Shīʿur Qomah: Texts and Recensions*, J.C.B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, Tübingen, p.2.

[264] Alphonse A. Barb, 1964, "Three Elusive Amulets," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 27, 1-22, at 5-6. Most recently, see Gideon Bohak, 2017, "God's Right Eye and Its Angel in Jewish and Christian Magic," In: *Anges et Démons d'Orient et d'Occident*, ed. Flavia Buzzetta, Éditions Kimé, Paris, p.63-89.

[265] Cohen, 1985, *The Shīʿur Qomah*, p.10-11 & fn 37.

[266] Christopher Rowland & Christopher R.A. Morray-Jones, 2009, *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament*, Brill, Leiden/Boston, p.287-288.

[267] Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.157. Also, in an article on Jewish magic which mentions that the Seal series was often known as the "Seal of Solomon," Gideon Bohak comments that symbols identified by this name were likely to be seen as the secret seals necessary for commanding specific demons (Bohak, 2011, "The Charaktêres in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic," 30-31).

[268] Esther Fernández Medina, 2012, "The Seal of Solomon: From Magic to Messianic Device," In: *Seals and Sealing Practices in the Near East: Developments in Administration and Magic from Prehistory to the Islamic Period*, ed. Ilona Regulski, Kim Duistermaat & Peter Verkinderen, Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven, p.175-188, at p.181.

[269] Venetia Porter, 2004, "Islamic Seals: Magical or Practical?" In: *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, ed. Emilie Savage-Smith, Ashgate Variorum, Aldershot, p.179-200, at p.190.

[270] Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," 244.

[271] Canaan, 1936, "Arabic Magic Bowls," 97.

[272] A facsimile of a printed amulet of this type is given by Pielow, 1995, *Die Quellen der Weisheit*, Bild 1 (unnumbered page immediately following p.207).

[273] Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.112-116.

[274] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere,* p.79-87.

[275] Samuel M. Zwemer, 1916, *The Disintegration of Islam*, Fleming H. Revell Co., London & Edinburgh, p.40-45.

[276] Stevenson, 1920, "Some Specimens of Moslem Charms," 99 & 104-105.

[277] E.g., Aḥmad al-Būnī (attrib.), *Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā*, "al-Ḥusaynī" lithograph/printed edition (Muḥammad ʿAlī Ṣubayḥ wa-ʾAwlāduh, Cairo, 1345-7/1927-8), Book 1, p.86; Graham, 2012, "The Seven Seals of Judeo-Islamic Magic," Fig. 5.

[278] Cohen, 1985, *The Shīʿur Qomah*.

[279] Gideon Bohak, 2017, "God's Right Eye and Its Angel in Jewish and Christian Magic," p.81-82.

[280] Samuel, 2007, "The Seven Mystical Seals."
[281] bar-Ilan, 1988, "Jewish Magical Body-Inscription."
[282] The Üsküdar Mevlevihane was closed in 1925 CE as part of Kemal Attaturk's reform program; its history is described online at http://www.mevlana800.info/sufi.htm (accessed 24 Feb, 2013). The handwritten journal (vol. 88), which is focused on the *Jaljalūtīah* conjuration (*Celcelûtiye* in Turkish), contains entries in many different hands and dates at least back to 1302 AH (1884 CE).
[283] Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing."
[284] See the mid-20th century CE vellum scroll from Safed, Israel, in Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers," Fig. 2b. Neither this example nor the one in Fig. 4c of the present paper include any of the Seal Names.
[285] Fodor, 1987-8, "A Group of Iraqi Arm Amulets."
[286] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers," Figs. 2a.
[287] Graham, 2012, "The Seven Seals of Judeo-Islamic Magic," Fig. 9d.
[288] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers," Fig.4a.
[289] Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls."
[290] Canaan, 1936, "Arabic Magic Bowls."
[291] Giovanni Canova, 1995, "La *Ṭāsat al-Ism*: Note su Alcune Coppe Magiche Yemenite," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 13 (Divination Magie Pouvoirs au Yémen), 73-92.
[292] Annette Ittig, 1982, "A Talismanic Bowl," *Annals Islamologiques* 18, 79-94.
[293] Porter, 2004, "Islamic Seals: Magical or Practical?," Fig. 8.10.
[294] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers," Fig. 4b.
[295] Ingrid Hehmeyer, 2008, "Water and Sign Magic in al-Jabin, Yemen," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 25 (3), 82-96.
[296] A.D.H. Bivar, 1980, "*Kitābāt* - In West Africa," sub-entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 5, fascicules 81-82, ed. C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, B. Lewis & C. Pellat, Brill, Leiden/Boston, p.221-223, at p.222.
[297] Alain Epelboin, Constant Hamès & Anne Raggi, 2007, "Cinq Tuniques Talismaniques Récentes en Provenance de Dakar (Sénégal)," In: *Coran et Talismans*, Karthala, Paris, p.147-174, at p.160 (image also reproduced in color on front cover) and p.168.
[298] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.95-102.
[299] Anka Stoilova, 2012, "Заклинания, свързани с арабски писмени паметници" ["Spells Associated with Arabic Manuscripts"], *Български фолклор* [*Bulgarian Folklore*] 3-4/2012, 85-108, at 94.
[300] Stoilova, 2012, "Заклинания," 94.
[301] Mommersteeg, 1988, "'He has Smitten her to the Heart with Love.'"
[302] Geert Mommersteeg, 1989, "Djenné Vraagt om Regen Islamitische Regenrituelen in een Stad in de Sahel," *Etnofoor* 2 (1), 71-83.
[303] Liliane Kuczynski, 2007, "Variations sur le Retour de l'Aimé: Consultations Maraboutiques Parisiennes," In: *Coran et Talismans*, Karthala, Paris, p.347-384, at p.370-371.
[304] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.102.
[305] Ittig, 1982, "A Talismanic Bowl," 86.
[306] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.95.
[307] Francis, 2005, *Islamic Symbols and Sufi Rituals*, p.164.
[308] Graham, 2011, "Qurʾānic Spell-ing."
[309] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.98-102.
[310] Moscow-Günzburg 775 (see fn 28, source 1, and fn 93 for details), f.36a, Babylon Human Translation; Jer. NLI Ms. Heb. 8°330/17, p.209a, author's translation.
[311] *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* (see fn 28, source 4, for details), p.268.
[312] *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (see fn 28, source 3, for details), Section 158.
[313] *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (see fn 28, source 3, for details), Section 158.
[314] *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* (see fn 28, source 4, for details), p.434.
[315] *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* (see fn 28, source 4, for details), p.335.
[316] *Tōldōt ʾĀdām* (see fn 28, source 3, for details), Section 92.
[317] Joel ben Uri Halpern, 1863 CE, *Mifʿalōt ʾEloqīm*, S.P. Stiller, Zolkiev, Ukraine, p.77 (counting title page as p.1). A reprinting of the original from 1735-7 CE.
[318] Schäfer, 2009, *Origins of Jewish Mysticism*, p.305.

[319] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.93-94.
[320] Schäfer, 2009, *Origins of Jewish Mysticism*, p.305.
[321] Green, 2004, *Judaic Artifacts*, p.37; it is sometimes used to drive demons from an infant.
[322] Green, 2004, *Judaic Artifacts*, p.9.
[323] al-Būnī (attrib.), *Uṣūl* (see fn 59 for details), p.182.
[324] Georges C. Anawati, 1972, "Trois Talismans Musulmans en Arabe Provenant du Mali (Marché de Mopti)," *Annales Islamologiques* 11, 287-339, at 303 (with misprinted first letter but correct numerical total); Name correct in Doutté, 1908, *Magie et Religion*, p.201.
[325] Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, *Risālah fī Sharḥ wa Tafsīr Ism al-Aʿẓam*, cited in Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī," and MacEoin, 1994, *Rituals in Babism and Bahaʾism*, p.146-152.
[326] When *wāw* is used as a consecutive conjunction it switches the temporal meaning of the verb to which it is prefixed, so that the imperfect now indicates the past and the perfect indicates the future. See J. Weingreen, 1939, *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, Oxford University Press, p.90 & 252; Paul Joüon, 1996, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. T. Muraoka, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Rome, p.387.
[327] As for fn 325.
[328] Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, *Risālah fī Sharḥ wa Tafsīr Ism al-Aʿẓam*, cited in Lambden, 2008/9, "Translations from the Writings of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī."
[329] Nineveh Shadrach, 2006, *Healing Love Prosperity Through Occult Powers of the Alphabet*, Ishtar, Vancouver, p.85-87.
[330] Wahid Azal, 2006, *Liber Decatriarchia Mystica – Sketchings of the Thirteen Encompassing Spheres of the Tree of Reality and Assorted Material*, Lulu, USA, p.111-121.
[331] Wahid Azal, 2008, "A Short Treatise in Explication Regarding the Gnosis of the Theophanic Stations of the Calligram of the Greatest Name of the Godhead." Online at http://wahidazal66.googlepages.com/GreatestNameCommentary.pdf, accessed 5 Sep, 2009.
[332] Others have seen the two gulfs in the first and last letter of *wāw*, the seventh Seal. See Todd Lawson, 2001, "Coincidentia Oppositorum in the Qayyum al-Asma: The Terms 'Point' (*nuqta*), 'Pole' (*qutb*), 'Center' (*markaz*) and the Khutbat al-Tatanjiya," *Occasional Papers in Shaykhi, Babi and Baha'i Studies* 5 (1), #1. Online at http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/bhpapers/vol5/tatanj/tatanj.htm, accessed 2 Jan, 2013.
[333] Azal, 2008, "A Short Treatise."
[334] "Miriam," 2005, *AngelSong*. Music CD by Rabbi Miriam Maron, PhD, www.miriamscyberwell.com/.
[335] Rabbi Miriam Maron, pers. comm. This perpetuates an ancient tradition of disguise and concealment in written Kabbalistic transmission, "with switched letters for each and every hint." See Fishbane, 2009, *As Light Before Dawn*, p.56 fn 14.
[336] Some justification for linking the Seals with the Seven Earths may be found in Ms. NYPL Heb. 190, which mentions, at the start of its discussion of the Seals, the "7 symbols and the governing angels with the 7 symbols and in 7 heavens and in 7 earths and in 7 years and in 7 Shemittot (i.e., Sabbatical years) […] and in 7 planets […] and 7 kinds of metals;" see Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic*, vol. 1, p.189-190 & vol. 2, p.146. The manuscript provides no details of the correspondences. For the ususal order of the Earths, see Peter Schäfer, 2004, "In Heaven as it is in Hell: The Cosmology of *Seder Rabbah di-Bereshit*," In: *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, ed. Raʿanan S. Boustan & Annette Y. Reed, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p.233-274, at p.267-270.
[337] E.g., online at http://www.walkingstick.org/ and http://www.miriamscyberwell.com/, accessed 12 Mar, 2013.
[338] Gabriella Samuel, 2007, "Olam (Olamot)," In: *The Kabbalah Handbook*, Tarcher/Penguin, New York/London, p.250-254.
[339] Gershon Winkler, 2003, *Magic of the Ordinary: Recovering the Shamanic in Judaism*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, p.27-28.
[340] Leah Vincent, 2011, "An Interview With Rabbi Gershon Winkler," *Unpious – Voices on the Hasidic Fringe*, In Conversation (21 June), online at http://www.unpious.com/2011/06/an-interview-with-rabbi-gershon-winkler/ (accessed 3 Mar, 2013); photo at http://www.unpious.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Gershon-leading-chant-in-Judean-desert.jpg

[341] Maura Singer Williams (*ca*. 2006) "*Tikkun Adamah w Polsce* (Healing the Mother Earth in Poland): An Ancestral Journey Into the Heart of Fear and Into the Arms of Matka Ziemna (Mother Earth)," online at www.polishancestralhealing.org/, p.16-17 of PDF; accessed 21 Mar, 2009. Currently the website is located at http://www.ancestralapothecary.com/ancestral.php.

[342] Lloyd D. Graham, 2010, "The Seven Seals of Revelation and the Seven Classical Planets," *Esoteric Quarterly* 6 (2), 45-58. Online at http://www.esotericquarterly.com/issues/EQ06/EQ0602/EQ060210-Graham.pdf.

[343] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.192-193.

[344] If we follow al-Tilimsānī's interpretation of each strokes as an *ʾalif* (Table 2, and as discussed later in the text), then the numerical value of this symbol is 4 x 1 = 4.

[345] The same is true for the *hāʾ* and (modified) inverted *wāw* near the end of the early/prototype sequence in the *Dīwān of ʿAlī* (Fig. 1b), but in that series the four strokes occupy position 7.

[346] Sabine Dorpmueller, 2012, Seals in Islamic Magical Literature, In: *Seals and Sealing Practices in the Near East: Developments in Administration and Magic from Prehistory to the Islamic Period*, ed. Ilona Regulski, Kim Duistermaat & Peter Verkinderen, Uitgeverij Peeters, Leuven, p.189-208.

[347] Gardiner, 2012, "Forbidden Knowledge?"

[348] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.153 & 176-178, and reiterated in English by Hehmeyer, 2008, "Water and Sign Magic," 87-88.

[349] Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabī, 2008, *The Seven Days of the Heart: Prayers for the Nights and Days of the Week*, trans. Pablo Beneito & Stephen Hirtenstein, Anqa Publishing, Oxford, p.117-119.

[350] Ibn ʿArabī, 2008, *The Seven Days of the Heart*, p.117-119.

[351] Ibn ʿArabī, 2008, *The Seven Days of the Heart*, p.118-119.

[352] Ignaz Goldziher, 1967, "Linguistisches aus der Literatur der Muhammedanischen Mystik," In: *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Joseph DeSomogyi, vol. I, Olms, Hildesheim, Germany, p.165-86, at p.166.

[353] John D. Martin III, 2011, *Theurgy in the Medieval Islamic World: Conceptions of Cosmology in al-Būnī's Doctrine of the Divine Names*, M.A. Dissertation, The American University in Cairo, p.75.

[354] A scan of the "translation" can be seen (in the entry *Loh e Hijjab Mubarrak*) on the Urdu *rūḥānī* website http://en.roohanialoom.com/?p=1851, accessed 20 Oct, 2012. The appellations for Seals 1-5 feature in a *ḥadīth* of ʾAnas ibn Mālik, a companion of the Prophet; Muḥammad reportedly indicated that these epithets form part of the Greatest Name (*Sunan* of ʾAbū Dāwud, Book 8, No. 1490). The phrase for Seals 4 and 5 comes from Qurʾān 55:27 and 55:78.

[355] Ibn ʿArabī, 2008, *The Seven Days of the Heart*, p.119.

[356] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.187.

[357] Canaan, 1936, "Arabic Magic Bowls," 95.

[358] Spoer, 1935, "Arabic Magic Medicinal Bowls," 242.

[359] E.g. *Maʿaseh Merkavah*, §588, cited by Peter Schäfer, 1992, *The Hidden and Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism*, SUNY Press, Albany, NY, p.80.

[360] Horowitz, 1996, *The Generations of Adam*, p.68.

[361] Graham, 2011, "Repeat-Letter Ciphers."

[362] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.94 & 187-191.

[363] Schrire, 1982, *Hebrew Magic Amulets,* p.103.

[364] *Shorshē ha-Shemōt* (see fn 28, source 4, for details), p.434.

[365] If the *niqqūd* is simply Tiberian vowelling reflected above the line, then the pronunciation would be *we-wa-we*.

[366] Fishbane, 2009, *As Light Before Dawn*, p.234-237.

[367] Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.124-131.

[368] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.194.

[369] Samaʾēl in Table 4, columns 5-6 leads – via his canonical assignment to Mars – to Tuesday and the third Seal in the most likely of Jewish correspondences (Table 4, columns 1-4). For direct evidence of the correspondence of Samaʾēl with Mars/Tuesday in Kabbalah, see Kaplan, 1997, *Sefer Yetzirah*, p.168.

[370] See the discussion earlier in the text under the section heading *Names*.

[371] In this manuscript's Seal series (Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic*, p.65), what looks like an inverted Arabic *wāw* appears not only in seventh position but also between the second and third Seals, its raised tail providing the former with the horizontal over-bar. Later in the

manuscript (Bohak, 2014, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic*, p.147), the seventh Seal symbol is shown where the third one is required, and no symbol is shown for the seventh Seal.

[372] Y.M. Almagor's *Book of the Treasures of Angels*, a modern (Hebrew) compilation of amuletic formulae published in 2006 by Almagor & Sons in Hod ha-Sharon, makes a similar mistake; on p.206, under the heading "Excellent Protection," it shows the seven Seals with the seventh symbol – which again looks like an inverted Arabic *wāw* – in both the third and seventh positions. Such confusion is rare, but not completely unknown, in Islamic series.

[373] Richard Gordon, 2002, "Another View of the Pergamon Divination Kit," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 15, 188-198, at 190. The author is speaking about magical *charakteres* in general, but his comments apply perfectly to the seven Seals.

[374] Algis Uždavinys, 2008, "Metaphysical Symbols and Their Function in Theurgy," *Eye of the Heart* 2, 37-59.

[375] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.94.

[376] Anawati, 1967, "Le Nom Supreme de Dieu," p.27.

[377] MacEoin, 1994, *Rituals in Babism and Baha'ism*, p.145.

[378] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.175-195.

[379] Dawkins, 1944, "The Seal of Solomon."

[380] Mircea Eliade, 1959, *The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Harcourt, Orlando, FL, p.129.

[381] Friedrich W. Gesenius, 1846, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, [Reprint: Baker Book House, 7th edition, 1979], p.236; Ernest Klein, 1987, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English*, Carta Jerusalem/Univ. Haifa, p.197.

[382] Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, *Preface to the Book of the Zōhar*, "An Essay About Letters," Sect. 189; online at http://www.kabbalah.info/eng/content/view/frame/27744?/eng/content/view/full/27744&main, accessed 30 Jan, 2015.

[383] Winkler, 2006, *Siegel und Charaktere*, p.109.